The true and Lively Effigies of Mr.
HAN: KNOLLIS Minister of ye Gospell
Aged 67. Yeares.

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THE PARABLE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN EXPOUNDED.

Or, An Exposition of the first thirteen Verses of the twenty fifth Chapter of *Matthew*.

Matth. 13. 34. *All these things spake Jesus to the Multitude in Parables, and without a Parable spake he not unto them.*

Luke 8. 10. *Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in Parables, &c.*

אֶפְתְּחָה בְמָשָׁל פִּי אַבִּיעָה חִידוֹת מִנִּי־קֶדֶם

Psal. 78. 2. *I will open my mouth in a Parable: I will utter dark sayings of old.*

Psal. 49 4. κλινῶ εἰς παραβολὴν τὸ ἐς μς.
I will incline mine ear to a Parable.

By *Han. Knollis.*

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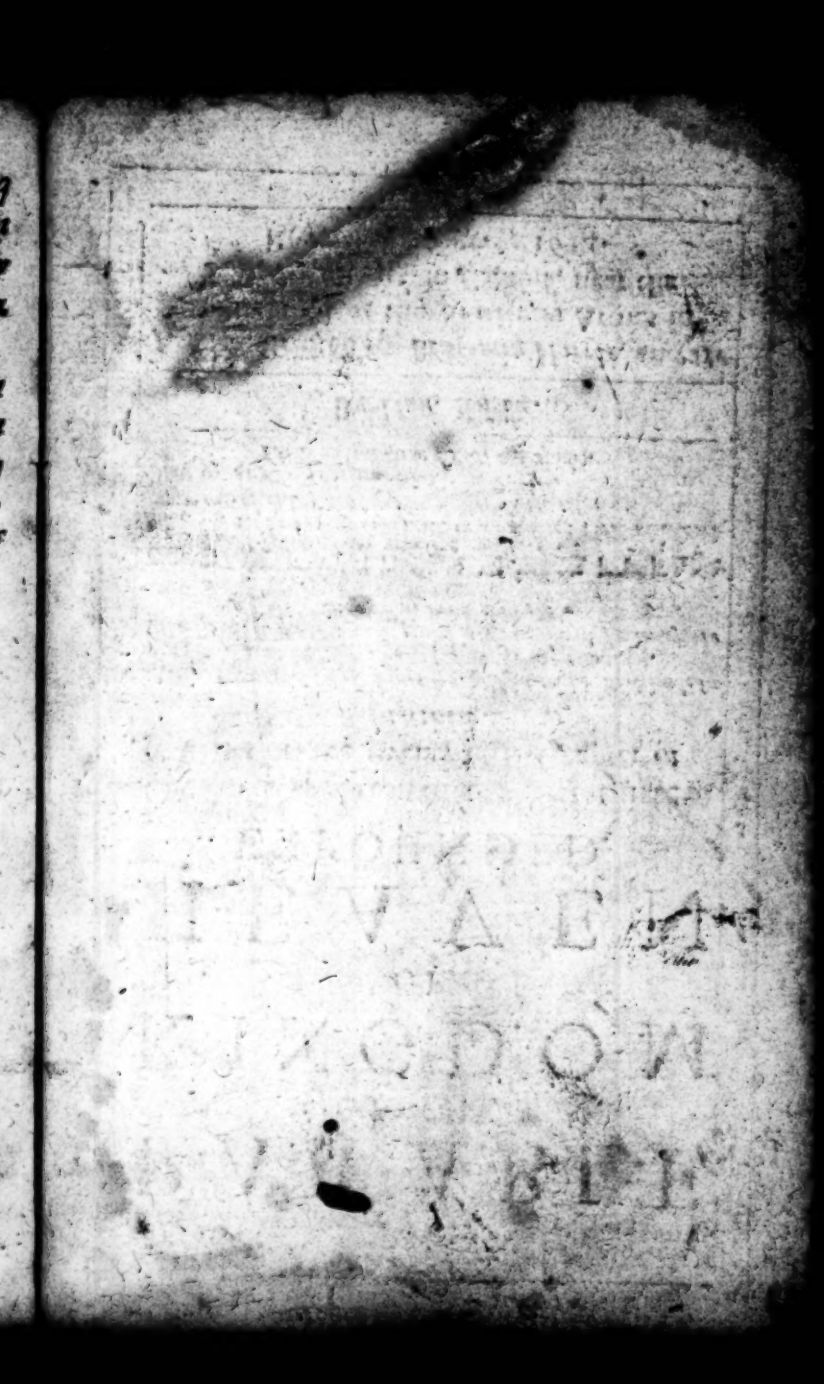

mary meade

Her book

TO THE READER.

ART thou a Profeſſour? I intreat thee do not reſt in the form of Godlineſs without the power thereof; that undid the fooliſh Virgins to Eternity. It's a vain thing for any perſon to ſeem to be Religious, and be not ſo in truth. The figtree that had leaves was Curſed by Chriſt, becauſe it bare no fruit; And it ſuddainly withered.

Art thou a Believer? Ponder then what is propounded in this little Treatiſe, and ſearch the Scriptures, whether what is therein affirmed be ſo, or not. I know but in part, yet am I willing to impart my

knowledge for thy Edification. And if any truth here asserted, shall profit thy understanding, my earnest Request to thee is, that thou wilt give all the Glory to God.

Art thou a Profane person, and One that dost scoff at the Doctrine of the Coming of Christ? then know, that yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry; But if (in the mean Time) thou dye in thy Sins, thou wilt be Damned to Eternity. Be serious therefore in Reading this little Book, it may be God will make it a Blessing to thy Soul, and then I have my End.

Thy souls friend

Han. Knollys.

Matth. XXV. 1. *to the end of the* thirteenth verſe.

1. Τότε ὁμοιωθήσεται ἡ βασιλεία τ̃ ὐρανῶν δέκα παρθένοις, αἵτινες λαβοῦσαι τὰς λαμπάδας ἑαυτῶν, ἐξῆλθον εἰς ἀπάντησιν τ̃ νυμφίου.

2. Πέντε δὲ ἦσαν ἐξ αὐτῶν φρόνιμοι καὶ πέντε μωραί.

3. Αἵτινες μωραὶ, λαβοῦσαι τὰς λαμπάδας ἑαυτῶν, οὐκ ἔλαβον μεθ' ἑαυτῶν ἔλαιον.

4. Αἱ δὲ φρόνιμοι ἔλαβον ἔλαιον ἐν τοῖς ἀγγείοις αὐτῶν μετὰ τῶν λαμπάδων αὐτῶν.

5. Χρονίζοντος δὲ τ̃ νυμφίου, ἐνύσταξαν πᾶσαι, καὶ ἐκάθευδον.

6. Μέσης δὲ νυκτὸς κραυγὴ γέγονεν· Ἰδοὺ, ὁ νυμφίος ἔρχεται, ἐξέρχεσθε εἰς ἀπάντησιν αὐτ̃.

7. Τότε ἠγέρθησαν

1. Then ſhall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten Virgins, which took their Lamps, and went forth to meet the Bridegroom.

2. And five of them were wiſe, and five were fooliſh.

3. They that were fooliſh, took their lamps, and took no oyle with them.

4. But the wiſe took oyle in their veſſels with their lamps.

5. While the Bridegroom tarryed, they all ſlumbered and ſlept.

6. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.

7. Then all thoſe Vir-

πᾶσαι αἱ παρθένοι ἐκεῖναι, καὶ ἐκόσμησαν τὰς λαμπάδας ἑαυτῶν.

8. Αἱ δὲ μωραὶ ταῖς φρονίμοις εἶπαν· Δότε ἡμῖν ἐκ τοῦ ἐλαίου ὑμῶν, ὅτι αἱ λαμπάδες ἡμῶν σβέννυνται.

9. Ἀπεκρίθησαν δὲ αἱ φρόνιμοι, λέγουσαι· Μήποτε οὐκ ἀρκέσῃ ἡμῖν καὶ ὑμῖν, πορεύεσθε δὲ μᾶλλον πρὸς τοὺς πωλοῦντας, καὶ ἀγοράσατε ἑαυταῖς.

10. Ἀπερχομένων δὲ αὐτῶν ἀγοράσαι, ἦλθεν ὁ νυμφίος· καὶ αἱ ἕτοιμοι εἰσῆλθον μετ' αὐτοῦ εἰς τοὺς γάμους, καὶ ἐκλείσθη ἡ θύρα.

11. Ὕστερον δὲ ἔρχονται καὶ αἱ λοιπαὶ παρθένοι, λέγουσαι· Κύριε, κύριε, ἄνοιξον ἡμῖν.

12. Ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐκ οἶδα ὑμᾶς.

13. Γρηγορεῖτε οὖν, ὅτι οὐκ οἴδατε τὴν ἡμέραν οὐδὲ τὴν ὥραν ἐν ᾗ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔρχεται.

gins arose and trimmed their lamps.

8. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oyle, for our lamps are gone out.

9. But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for your selves.

10. And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came, and they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut.

11. Afterward came also the other Virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day, nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

THe Lord Jesus Christ being asked by his Disciples what shall be *the sign of his coming*, Ch. 24. 3. answered and said *ver.* 12. *Iniquity shall abound and the love of many shall wax cold,*

cold, and ver. 21. *Then ſhall be great Tribulation, ſuch as was not ſince the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever ſhall be.* So the Apoſtle teſtified alſo, 2 Tim. 3. 1. But ſaith our Saviour ver. 29. *Immediately after the Tribulation of thoſe days*, ver. 30. *Then ſhall appear* (not the perſon but) *the ſign of the Son of Man in Heaven*—— *And they ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven with power and great Glory*—— *Then ſhall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened to ten Virgins*, Chap. 25. 1.

Theſe thirteen verſes contain a Parable and the Application of it to Chriſts Diſciples. In the Parable are three General parts, *viz.* 1. *Parabolæ* πρότασις, ver. 1.—5. 2. ἐπίτασις, ver. 6—9. And 3. κατάστροφη, ver. 10.—13. And the Exhortation or Application of the Parable, in *ver.* 13.

In the πρότασις of the Parable obſerve 1. The time, τότε *Then*, that is when the Kingdom of God, and Coming of Chriſt in power and great glory is at hand, *or near*, even at the door: 2. The Subject or Matter that our Saviour ſpake of; *The Kingdom of Heaven*: 3. The Reſemblance thereof, *Likened unto ten Virgins*, who are deſcribed in this firſt verſe by their preparation, *They took their Lamps*; and by their Action, *They went out to meet the Bridegroom.*

Then

Then ſhall the Kingdom of Heaven, &c.

By the Kingdom of Heaven in ſome places of the holy Scripture we are to underſtand the Kingdom of Glory, Matth. 5. 3. *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* In other places of Scripture by the Kingdom of Heaven, we are to underſtand the ſpiritual Kingdom of Grace in the hearts of ſanctified Believers, Matth. 13. 31. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a grain of Muſtard-ſeed.* By the Kingdom of Heaven in ſome other places of Scripture we are to underſtand the myſtical Kingdom of the Church of Chriſt under the Goſpel, Matth. 16. 18, 19. *Upon this Rock* (that Rock is Chriſt, 1 Cor. 10. 4.) *I will build my Church* ——— *And I will give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

By the Kingdom of Heaven in this verſe we may not underſtand the Celeſtial Kingdom of Glory, for there are no fooliſh Virgins in that Heaven, nor the ſpiritual Kingdom of Grace which is the Kingdom of God within us, *Luk.* 17. 21. But the Myſtical Kingdom of the Church of God under the Goſpel, wherein there are both wiſe and fooliſh Virgins.

1. *Meditation.* Every true viſible Conſtituted Church of Chriſt under the Goſpel did in the Apoſtles dayes and ſhall in the latter dayes

dayes bear ſome reſemblance unto the Kingdom of Heaven. For Confirmation of this Doctrine Read Iſa. 60. 1, 2, 3, 7, 13, 14, 15, 19, 22. *The glory of the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee*, ver. 2. *I will glorifie the houſe of my glory*, ver. 7. *And I will make the place of my feet glorious*, ver. 13. *I will make thee an eternal Excellency*, ver. 15. *The Lord ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting Light, and thy God thy Glory*, ver. 19. *I the Lord will haſten it in his time*, ver. 22. that is, in Chriſts Day.

In the Explication of this point two things are to be enquired into: 1. What is a true viſible conſtituted Church of Chriſt under the Goſpel: 2. Wherein the Church of God on Earth bears proportion with and reſemblance unto the Kingdom of Heaven.

Touching the firſt particular, A true viſible Conſtituted Church of Chriſt under the Goſpel is a Congregation of Saints, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. Called out of the World, *Rom.* 1. 7. Separated from Idolaters and Idol Temples, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 17. from the unbelieving Jews and their Synagogues and all legal obſervations of holy dayes, Sabbath dayes, and Moſaical Rites, Ceremonies and ſhadows, *Act.* 19. 9. *Coll.* 2. 16, 17. and aſſembled together in one place, 1 *Cor.* 14. 23. On the Lords Day *the firſt day of the Week*, Acts 20. 7. to worſhip

God

God visibly by the spirit and in the truth, *Joh.* 4. 23, 24. in the holy Ordinances of God, *1 Cor.* 11. 2. according to the faith and order of the Gospel, *Col.* 2. 5.

Touching the second particular to be enquired into, it consists of two parts. 1. The Church is called a Kingdom. 2. The Church is called the Kingdom of Heaven. The Church is compared to a Kingdom: Because 1. Christ the head of the Church, is the King of Saints, *Rev.* 15. 3. and the King of *Zion*, *Psal.* 2. 6. *and* 149. 1, 2. *Let the Children of* Zion (the Congregation of Saints, ver. 1.) *be joyful in their King.*

2. The Church of God is Christs Throne, Jer. 17. 12. *A glorious high Throne from the beginning* (of his Mystical Kingdom) *is the place of our Sanctuary*, Rev. 4. 4. *A throne was set in Heaven*, The Church, *and ONE sate on the throne*, namely Christ; *And round about the Throne were twenty four Seats* or Thrones; *And upon the Seats I saw twenty four Elders* (the spiritual Priests of God) *sitting cloathed in white Raiment, and they had on their heads Crowns of Gold.*

3. Christ the King of his Church, is their Law-giver, *Isa.* 33. 22. The Lord is our Statute-maker, and the Bible is his Statute-Book wherein are published all the Laws of Gods house, *Ezek.* 43. 10, 11. according to which

Laws

Laws the Church of Saints are to be governed by their Elders whom Christ hath set over them to Rule and Govern them, *Heb.* 13 7, 17. according to the Laws of his house.

The Church is compared to the Kingdom of Heaven, 1. with respect unto the gracious and glorious presence of God the Father, Son and holy Spirit in the Church: God dwelleth in *Zion*, *Psal.* 9. 11. *Joel* 3. 21. for it is his Rest, *Psal.* 132. 14. *Matth.* 18. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* Rev. 2. 1. *Christ walketh in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks.* Gods presence makes Heaven to be Heaven, and that makes a Heaven on Earth, a Heaven in the heart, and a Heaven in the Congregations of Saints.

2. With respect unto the spiritual glory of the Church of God in the later dayes, *Isa.* 60. 7, 13. The Beauties of Holiness, *Psal.* 110. 3. makes *Zion* the perfection of Beauty, *Psal.* 50. 2. The Temple was filled with the Glory of God, Ezek. 43. 5. & 44. 4. *And the Glory of the Lord filled the House of the Lord.* The house of the Lord is the Church of the living God, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. And the Temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, *Rev.* 15. 8.

3. With respect unto the great Company and number of Saints in the Assemblies and Churches

Churches of Christ (called the Churches of Saints, 1 *Cor.* 14. 33.), among whom and in whose Assemblies are the holy Angels because of whose presence the Women were to be vailed, 1 *Cor.* 11. 10. This will be more Evident in the last dayes, when the holy City the New *Jerusalem* shall come down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband, *Rev.* 21. 1, 2, 3. And when we are come to Mount *Zion*, unto the City of the Living God, the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, to the general Assembly and Church of the first born, and to Jesus the Mediatour of the new Covenant, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23, 24. then will the Church of God on Earth bear some greater proportion with and resemblance unto the Kingdom of Heaven.

Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten Virgins, &c. Ten is a Mystical number as Dan. 7. 7, 20, 24. *ten horns*, Jude 14. *ten thousand of Saints*, Rev. 2. 10. *ten dayes*, and so ten Virgins; that is a *definite* number for an *indefinite*. By Virgins we are to understand Gospel Professors and Church-members, (2 Cor. 11. 2. *I have espoused you to one Husband that I may present you as a chast Virgin to Christ*) who have escaped the pollutions of the World through the knowledge of Christ, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. Some are foolish Virgins, formal professors denying the power of God-

Godlineſs, only ſeeming to be Religious, *James* 1.26. who after they have eſcaped the Pollutions of the World through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, are again entangled therein and overcome, whoſe later end is worſe than their beginning, 2 *Pet.* 2.20.

Others who are wiſe Virgins having not only the form but the power of Godlineſs alſo, and being partakers of the Divine Nature have eſcaped the Corruption that is in the World through Luſt, 2 *Pet.* 1.4. Theſe being not defiled with ſpiritual Whoredoms do follow Chriſt whereſoever he goes, Rom. 14.4. *Theſe are they which are not defiled with Women* (neither the *great Whore* of *Rome*, *Myſtery Babylon*, the Mother of Harlots, *Rev.* 17. 1, 5. nor the *Daughters* of that Whore, *falſe Churches*, whoſe *Mother* Myſtical *Babylon* is, though ſome of thoſe *Daughters* be (as *Nineveh* was called, *Nahum* 3. 4.) *well-favoured Harlots*, becauſe of the multitude of their ſpiritual Whoredoms.

2. *Meditation.* The Churches of Saints in the laſt dayes ſhall be reformed and reſtored unto a Virgin ſtate of primitive purity and ſpiritual Glory, *as in the Apoſtles dayes.*

For the Confirmation of this Doctrine Read and Conſider theſe Scriptures, *viz.* Iſa. 2. 2, 3, 4, 5. *And it ſhall come to paſs in the*

laſt

laſt dayes that the Mountain of the Lords houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the Mountains, &c. Iſa. 60. 2, 3, 4, 5. &c. *He that is left in* Sion *and he that remaineth in* Jeruſalem *ſhall be called holy*, &c. Iſa. 60. 17, 13, 21. *I will glorifie the houſe of my Glory, and I will make the place of my feet glorious*, &c. Iſa. 65. 17, 18, 19, 25. *For behold I create new Heavens and a new earth*, &c. Rev. 20. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Behold I make all things new*, 2 Pet. 3. 13, 14. Rev. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Theſe are they that follow the Lamb* ——— *for they are Virgins.*

In the Explication of this point we are to conſider two particulars.

1. What Reformation will be in the Churches of Saints in the laſt dayes.

2. What things ſhall be reſtored then which are or have been wanting in the Churches of Saints ſince the Apoſtles dayes.

Touching the *firſt* particular, 1. Profeſſors of the Goſpel and Members of Churches will be much reformed from many Corruptions in their Judgements and Converſations. The Apoſtles tell us and foretold the Churches that in the later dayes ſome Profeſſors would be corrupted in their Judgements; compare 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2, 3. with 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3. *And many ſhall follow their pernicious wayes, by reaſon of whom the way of truth ſhall be evil ſpoken of.* And in the laſt dayes other Profeſſors would

would be corrupted in their Converſations 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Covetous, proud, promiſe and Covenant Breakers, Lovers of pleaſures more than Lovers of God, having a form of Godlineſs but denying the power thereof:* and are not too too many members of Churches (*who ſeem to be religious*, Jam. 1. 26.) very much corrupted in their Judgements, and ſome alſo in their Converſations? But the days are coming when there ſhall be a great Reformation in both theſe Reſpects.

For God will return to the people a pure Language, Zeph. 3. 9, 13. *The Remnant of* Iſrael *ſhall not do iniquity nor ſpeak lyes, neither ſhall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.* And thoſe Virgin profeſſors that follow the Lamb, Rev. 14. 4, 5. *ſhall be redeemed from the Earth*, verſ. 3. *and from men*, verſ. 4. *And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God*, verſ. 5.

2. The Diſcipline and Government of the Churches will be very much reformed in the laſt days, for then Chriſt the *LORD will Reign in Mount Sion, and in Jeruſalem and before his Ancients gloriouſly*, Mich. 4. 6, 7. *from henceforth even for ever.* The Churches of Saints ſhall be ruled and Governed by the holy, Righteous and good Laws of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Iſa.* 33. 22. who is the Son over

the houſe of God, Heb. 3. 1, 6. Ezek. 43. 10, 11. *Shew them all the Laws of the houſe and let them meaſure the Pattern*, &c. Iſa. 9. 6, 7. *The Government ſhall lye upon his ſhoulders.* Chriſt is the Legiſlator, the Law-giver, the Bible is his and his Churches Statute Book, and all the Churches, Miniſters and Saints of God are to be governed by his Royal Law of Liberty, in obeying and keeping whereof there is a Bleſſing promiſed, *James* 1. 25.

Touching the ſecond particular, 1. The Miniſtry of the Goſpel will be reſtored in the later dayes, Jer. 13. 14, 15. *I will bring you to Sion and I will give you Paſtors according to my heart, they ſhall feed you with knowledge and with underſtanding.*

2. The gifts of the holy ſpirit ſhall be reſtored in the laſt dayes, Joel 2. 21, 23, 28, 29, 30 31. *The LORD will do great things——— Be glad then ye Children of Zion——— I will pour out my ſpirit upon all fleſh*, &c. Acts 2. 17, 18. *And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt dayes (ſaith God) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all fleſh*, &c. This is that which God hath promiſed and will again perform.

3. The Ordinances of God will be reſtored to his Churches in the later dayes. Antichriſt hath made void the Commandments of God by the Traditions of men (as the Scribes

Scribes and Pharisees did *Mark* 7. 6, 7, 8.) And he hath changed the Ordinances of Christ, and brought in the Ordinances of men, Col. 2. 20, 22, 23. *Why are ye subject to Ordinances* (or Traditions) *after the Commandments and Doctrines of men*, which is (ἐθελοθρησκεία) will-worship, *vers.* 23. and vain worship, *Matth.* 15. 8, 9. (ματαίαν δὲ σέβονταί με) *But in vain do they worship me*, &c. The Ordinances of God (which have been corrupted by mens Inventions, and superstitions,) shall be restored to their primitive purity and first Institutions. Read *Jer.* 32. 38. & 30. 40. and compare it with *Zeph.* 3. 9. Then will I turn to the people a pure Language (or a *clean Lip*) *that they may call upon the Name of the Lord and serve him with one shoulder* (or consent:) *In that Day the* LORD *shall be* ONE, *and his Name* ONE; that is, in the later Days Christ and his Saints shall be ONE Kingdom: and his way and worship but ONE in all the Earth.

Which took their Lamps. The Virgin Professors of the Gospel and Worshippers of God in the Churches of Christ have Lamps, *that is*, the presence of God in his Worship and Ordinances; Matth. 18. 20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my name*, saith Christ, *there am I in the midst of them.* So

God manifested his presence with *Abraham* when he was offering a Sacrifice to the Lord, Gen. 15. 17, 18. *Behold a smoaking furnace and a burning Lamp, passed between those pieces; And God made a Covenant with Abraham.* Read *Exod.* 19. 18, 27. & 20. 11. & *Isa.* 4. 5. *Rev.* 15. 9. God appointed seven Lamps to be lighted and supplyed with sweet Oyle of Olives, both in his Wilderness Tabernacle, *Exod.* 25. 37. and in his *Canaan* Temple, 2 *Chron.* 4. 20, 21. that they might burn continually before the Lord, which typed forth the seven Spirits of God, Rev. 3. 1. 4. 5. *And there were seven Lamps of Fire burning before the throne which are the seven Spirits of God*, that is, the variety and abundance of the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Eternal Spirit. There are diversity of Gifts, but the same Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. and so there are divers and many fruits of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22, 23.

Αἵτινες λαβοῦσαι τὰς λαμπάδας ἑαυτῶν. *These seven Virgins having received their Lamps*, to wit, a commandment from the Lord (for the Commandment is a Lamp, *Prov.* 6. 23.) to worship him by the Spirit in Truth, and Spiritual Gifts and Grace to perform the Gospel Instituted Ordinances of Christ according to the holy Will of God revealed in his written word; *for his Word is a Lamp,*

unto the feet of his Saints, and a Light unto their Paths, Pſal. 119. 105.

3. *Meditation.* The Virgin Profeſſors of the Goſpel and Worſhippers of God in the Churches of Saints ſhall have Goſpel Light and Spiritual Gifts in the later dayes to Worſhip God in the Order and Ordinances of the Goſpel according to the written Word of God.

Firſt, Virgin Profeſſors ſhall have Goſpel Light in the later dayes to worſhip God aright. The written Word of God (*through the teachings of the holy Spirit*) to wit, the commands of Chriſt and the Examples of his Apoſtles, Churches, and Saints approved by Chriſt (*recorded in the holy Scripture of Truth*) will be a Lamp and a Light unto them, *Pſal.* 119. 105. *Prov.* 6. 23. & 1 *Cor.* 11. 1, 2. 14. 37. *Phil.* 3. 16, 17. & *Iſa.* 60. 1, 2, 3. *Ariſe, ſhine, thy Light is come—— And the Gentiles* (or Heathen Nations) *ſhall come to thy Light*, &c.

Secondly, Virgin Profeſſors in the Churches of Chriſt in the later Dayes ſhall have ſpiritual Gifts qualifying and inabling them to worſhip God by the Spirit and in the Truth in the Order and Ordinances of the Goſpel, Acts 2. 17. *And it ſhall come to paſs* (*ſaith God*) *in the laſt Dayes, I will pour out my ſpirit upon all fleſh*, &c. 1 Cor. 12. 4. *There are Diverſities of Gifts, but the ſame ſpirit.* As

in the Dayes of the Apostles, so shall it be in the last Dayes, *Joel* 2. 21, 28, 29. much more powred forth.

And went forth to meet the Bridegroom. This Bridegroom is the Lord Jesus Christ, Joh. 3. 29 *He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom*, that is, Jesus Christ, to whom his Churches and Saints are espoused, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2. whom Christ hath betrothed to himself in loving kindness and faithfulness for ever, *Hosea* 2. 19, 20. They are his Sister and his Spouse, *Cant.* 4. 10. The Lambs Wife, *Rev.* 19. 7, 8. And He is the Bridegroom, Isa. 62. 5. *With the Joy of the Bridegroom over the Bride shall the* LORD *rejoice over thee.*

To meet the Bridegroom, doth imply two things. *First*, That the Virgins did know and believe that Christ was coming, Psal. 96. 9 (11, 13. *O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Let the Heavens rejoice, and let the Earth be glad and rejoice before the Lord, for he cometh, for he cometh* &c. Had not the foolish Virgins known and Believed that Christ would come, yea and that he was coming, they would not have gone out to meet him, but would rather have scoffed at his coming, when the wise Virgins had spoken of it, as those Scoffers will do, 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4. *There shall come in the last Dayes Scoffers*

ſaying where is the promiſe of his Coming?

Secondly, That all the Virgins did know and believe, That the coming of the ſpiritual Bridegroom Chriſt Jeſus was near, and that he would come quickly or ſhortly: The Bridegrooms coming was even at the Door, therefore they went out to meet him, Heb. 10. 37. *Yet a little while and HE that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the Juſt ſhall live by Faith.* The Virgins believed this and went out to meet the Bridegroom, and they had Scripture ground to believe it, becauſe Chriſt had revealed it in his written word, *Rev.* 22. 12. Behold I come quickly, *verſ.* 20. *HE which teſtifieth theſe things ſaith ſurely I come quickly*, Amen.

They went out to meet the Bridegroom, *that is*, The Virgin Profeſſors in the Churches of Saints in the later dayes knowing and Believing the Coming of Chriſt the Bridegroom, will go out from their neareſt and deareſt Relations, their great Poſſeſſions. They will forſake Father and Mother, Wife and Children that will not go out with them to meet the Bridegroom, and will follow him whereſoever he goes, as his Diſciples did, *Matth.* 19. 27. So will the Virgins do, *Rev.* 14. 1, 4. And it is the Duty of all Chriſts Diſciples ſo to do, *Luke* 14. 26, 27. *Mat.* 20. 37, 38, 39.

And they that forſake all their Relations, Eſtates, Lands, Houſes, Goods and all for Chriſt, ſhall not loſe by ſo doing, Luk. 18. 28, 29, 30. & Mark 10. 28, 29, 30. Rev. 22. 12. *Behold I come quickly and my Reward is with me.*

4. *Meditation.* That ſuch Goſpel Light will be revealed to Virgin Profeſſors in the later dayes, and ſuch anointing of the Spirit will be poured out upon them, as will cauſe them and make them willing to ſell all, loſe all and forſake all, and go out to meet the Bridegroom.

1. Goſpel Light touching the Kingdom and Coming of the ſpiritual Bridegroom our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will be revealed in the later dayes; Matth. 24. 14. *And this Goſpel of the Kingdom ſhall be Preached in all the world—— And then ſhall the E N D come;* Zech. 14. 6, 7. 7. *It ſhall come to paſs, That at Evening Time it ſhall be light.* ——— *And the Lord ſhall be King over all the Earth. In that D A Y ſhall there be O N E Lord and his Name O N E.* And Rev. 22. 5. *The Lord God giveth them Light——— And they ſhall ſee his face, and his Name ſhall be in their foreheads, And they ſhall Reign for ever and ever—— Which muſt ſhortly be done,* Behold I come quickly, &c.

2. The Anointings of the Spirit, the Gifts and powerful operations of the Spirit will be upon Virgin Profeſſors in the later Dayes, *Joel* 2. 28, 29. *Iſa.* 43. 3, 5, 6. *& Chap.* 32. 15, 16, 17. 1 *John* 2. 13, 14, 20, 27. The Fathers, the young Men, and the little Children ſhall have the *Unction* of the Holy ONE, *&c.* Then it will be with Virgin Profeſſors as it was in the Apoſtles Dayes, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, *&c. There are Diverſities of Gifts but the ſame ſpirit; and there are diverſities of operations but the ſame God; All theſe worketh one and the ſelf ſame Spirit.*

3. This Goſpel Light, Anointing and operation of the Holy Spirit upon Virgin Profeſſors in the laſt Dayes will ingage them and make them willing to go out to meet the Bridegroom, Pſal. 110. 2, 3. *The Lord will ſend the Rod of thy ſtrength out of Sion: Rule thou in the midſt of thine Enemies. Thy People ſhall be willing in the DAY of thy power, in the Beauties of Holineſs,* &c. God will put his Spirit within them and cauſe them to walk in his wayes, *Ezek.* 36. 27. HE will pour his Spirit upon them, *Ezek.* 39. 29. and they ſhall obey his voice, Matth. 25. 6. *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.* And they went out to meet the Bridegroom.

Verſ. 2.

Verſ. 2. *And five of them were wiſe and five were fooliſh.*

In this Parable Virgin Profeſſors in the Churches of Saints are variouſly diſtinguiſhed by Chriſt; viz. *Five of them are wiſe and five are fooliſh.* 2. The Fooliſh took no Oyle with them, but what was in their Lamps, *verſ.* 3. The Wiſe took Oyle in their Veſſels with their Lamps, *verſ.* 4. 3. The Lamps of the Wiſe Virgins (*being trimmed and ſupplyed with oyle in their Veſſels*) continued burning, The Lamps of the fooliſh Virgins (*being trimmed but not ſupplyed with oyle*) went out, *verſ.* 7, 8. 4. The Wiſe Virgins, *being ready*, went in with the Bridegroom to the Marriage: but the fooliſh Virgins, *not being prepared*, were ſhut out, *verſ.* 10, 11, 12.

This verſe contains the firſt *Diſtinction* of Virgin Profeſſors; Five were wiſe, and five were fooliſh. Five is a *definite* number put for an *indefinite*, and thereby a ſmall number is here put for a great number, and a few for very many, the five *fooliſh* Virgins, for all ſorts of Goſpel Profeſſors, who having a form of Godlineſs want the power thereof, 2 *Tim* 3. 5. And the five *wiſe* Virgins, for all ſorts of Worſhippers of God that make *not only* a Profeſſion of Chriſt, but have *alſo* Poſ-

ſeſſion

ession of Christ dwelling in their hearts, *Ephes.* 3. 17. both which particulars will plainly appear in the Expoſition and handling of the 3 and 4 verſes.

Meditation. There are ſome wiſe, and many fooliſh Virgins.

The Holy Spirit hath given many diſtinguiſhing Characters in the Scripture of Truth between theſe wiſe and fooliſh Virgins, whereof ſome in this Parable, which I have already mentioned in General, and ſhall afterwards ſhew particularly. And the Scripture Diſtinctions between ſanctified Believers and Hypocrites; between them, that *only* ſeem to be Religious, and them that are *ſincerely* ſo in deed and Truth; between thoſe that are in Chriſt, having an Everlaſting and unſeparable Union with him, and thoſe that are without Chriſt, who make a profeſſion of Chriſt, but have not poſſeſſion of Chriſt in their hearts; I ſay all thoſe ſcripture diſtinctions are applicable, and may be accommodated unto wiſe and fooliſh Profeſſors, but eſpecially that Scripture *Diſtinction*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1—5. which the holy Spirit makes between *them that have the form, and them that have the power of Godlineſs*, which Chriſt in this Parable doth metaphorically expreſs by the fooliſh Virgins, *verſ.* 3. who took their Lamps, but took no Oyle with them, and

the

the Wise Virgins, that took Oyle in their Vessels with their Lamps, *vers.* 4.

Vers. 3, 4. *They that were foolish took their Lamps, and took no Oyle with them. But the wise took Oyle in their Vessels with their Lamps.*

By Lamps we are to understand Temple Light, *viz.* Divine knowledge and spiritual Gifts, as hath been proved in the Exposition of the *first* verse, Whereby our Saviour did Mystically and Metaphorically shew, *That the foolish Virgins had a form of Godliness.*

By Oyle in their Lamps is mean that shining outward profession of Christ, which went out at last, vers. 8. *Give us of your Oyle for our Lamps are gone out.* The Light of the knowledge of Christ and of the Prophecies and of the Mysteries of his Kingdom and Coming, which shined in the Profession they made, and in the Witness and Testimony that they had born for Christ against Antichrist, withered away and died; And all their common Gifts and Graces faded and failed; And they all fell away like the stony ground hearers, Luke 13. 8. *Who believe for a time, but in Time of Temptation fall away.*

By

By Oyle in the Wise Virgins Vessels we are to understand Jesus Christ, and the spirit of Christ and the sanctifying knowledge of Christ, and the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in their hearts and in their souls. For their souls are Vessels of Mercy prepared for Glory, *Rom* 9.23,24. And their Mystical and spiritual Oyle is the Unction of the Holy ONE, which they have received, 1 *John* 2.20, 27. Whereby our Saviour did figuratively and Mystically shew *That the Wise Virgins had the power of Godliness.* And in this part of the Parable of the Kingdom of Heaven, Christ declares and testifies, That they are foolish Virgins, who rest satisfied and content themselves with the form of Godliness without the power of Godliness; who have Lamps but no Oyle.

2. That they are wise Virgins who have both Lamps and Oyle in their Vessels (*to wit*, Christ and his Spirit and his Grace in their hearts) having both the Form and Power of Godliness.

Meditation. It's not the Lamp-light of Profession and the Form of Godliness; but the *Oyle* of Grace, and Sanctification, *even* the Power of Godliness in heart and Life, that will put the Denomination of, and distinction between wise and foolish Virgin Professors in the last dayes.

Though

Though this be very clear and plain by what hath been already ſaid, in this Expoſition; yet becauſe I do think it may be profitable, *firſt*, for the Conviction of ſome formal Profeſſors, who are fooliſh Virgins, *eſpecially* ſinners in *Sion*, unconverted Church members. And 2. For the Edification and Eſtabliſhment of Sanctified Believers in the viſible conſtituted Churches of Chriſt, *eſpecially* weak Chriſtians: I am therefore willing (*through Divine Aſſiſtance*) to treat more largely of the Form and power of Godlineſs, (and therein to demonſtrate the Wiſdom and folly of Virgin Profeſſors) than I ſhall do of ſome other things held forth in this Parable, which I judge leſs neceſſary to inlarge upon.

That which I ſhall offer to Conſideration touching the Form and Power of Godlineſs doth conſiſt in theſe three following Propoſitions.

1. *There is the Form of Godlineſs and the power of Godlineſs.* All the Virgins had burning and ſhining Lamps, and ſome of them had Oyle in their Veſſels with their Lamps, *verſ.* 3.

2. *The form of Godlineſs may be where the Power of Godlineſs is not.* The fooliſh Virgins took their Lamps, but took no Oyle with them, verſ. 3. *to wit* in their Veſſels, *that is*,

They

They had the form of Godlineſs in their Profeſſion, but they wanted the power of Godlineſs in their hearts and Converſation.

3. *That ſome Virgin Profeſſors in the Churches of Saints having the form of Godlineſs will deny the power thereof in the laſt dayes*, of whom the Apoſtle ſpake expreſly and foretold, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.

Touching the firſt Propoſition, μόρφωσις ſignifies any form, or kind of Worſhip, or Godlineſs, and having no Article joyned with it, it doth not ſignifie *this*, *that*, or *the form* of Godlineſs properly, or ſtrictly; but indefinitely, any form, and every form of Godlineſs, and conſequently *the form* of Godlineſs.

There are divers forms of Religion wherein men worſhip and ſerve God according to the different apprehenſions and perſwaſions of perſons profeſſing Godlineſs; whereof ſome, yea ſeveral are of mans deviſing, *Matth.* 15. 8, 9. compared with *Col.* 2. 20, 22, 23. But, there is a form of Godlineſs, which is of Gods own Inſtitution under the Goſpel, wherein Men ought to worſhip God in Spirit and Truth, *John* 4. 23, 24. according to his own appointments, *Pſal.* 3. 3. 16.

The Form of Godlineſs (*of Gods own appointment*) conſiſts in the External religious performance of all thoſe Evangelical Duties which

which he hath Commanded us in his holy Word, *Ezek.* 43. 10, 11. according as he hath commanded, wherein persons seem to be religious and Godly. Formal Professors do perform those religious Duties 1. From a principle of self which is the common and highest principle that formal Professors and Hypocrites are acted by in the Worship of God. They pray for themselves, fast and mourn for themselves and live to themselves, *Zech.* 7. 4, 5, 6. Self-love, self-seeking, self-confidence, self-dependance, self-sufficiency, self-righteousness, and self-salvation is the frame and End of a formal professor. Self is the Spring and main principle of all he doth in his Religion, *Hosea* 10. 1, 2. *Israel* is an empty Vine, He brings forth fruit unto himself.

2. From a principle of Tradition which they have received from their Fathers by custome and Education; So did the Apostle *Paul* Worship God before his Conversion, being zealous of the Traditions of his Fathers, Gal. 1. 14, 15. *I profited in the Jews Religion above many* ——— *Being more exceedingly zealous of the Traditions of my Fathers.* Thus many formal Professors now worship God after the Traditions and Customs of their Fathers and Teachers, as the Scribes and Pharisees did, whom Christ reprehended *Mark* 7. 8, 9, 13.

8, 9, 13. *Ye hold the Tradition of men*, and in vain did they worship God, making the word and Commandments of God of none effect by their Traditions. Jer. 7 18. & 44. 16, 17. *The Children gather wood and the Fathers kindle the Fire, and the Women knead their Dough to make Cakes to the Queen of Heaven and to pour out drink-offerings unto other Gods, that they may provoke me to anger.* ——— *As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee* ——*But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth to burn incense unto the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes in the Cities of* Judah, *and in the streets of* Jerusalem: *for then had we plenty of Victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.*

3. From a principle of fear; *legal fear*, (*to wit*, the fear of hell, wrath or Curse, &c.) causeth many professors, to pray, hear Sermons, perform holy duties, and to partake of Gods Ordinances; Also *a servile fear* of the Anger and displeasure of men, causeth many Children and Servants to Worship God formally, and they seem to be Religious because they are afraid to anger and displease their Godly Parents, Masters, or some other Godly

Relations; And that their *fear of God* is taught by the Commandments of men, *Isa.* 29. 13. And thereby they are made conformable unto the External parts of Gods Worship, and attain unto a Form of Godliness; yet are without the power thereof.

4. From a Principle of superstition many are like the Idolaters of *Athens*, who worshipped the unknown God, *Acts* 17. 22, 23. they were very superstitious in their Will-worship of God. The Zeal and Superstition of the Scribes and Pharisees made them so formal in their legal Ceremonial worship of God, *Luk.* 18. 12. I fast *twice a week*, &c. and *Rom.* 10. 2. Many of the Jews being zealous in their Devotion, but wanting knowledge, worshipped God according to the superstitious Inventions of men, which things *saith the Apostle* have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, *Col.* 2. 20, 23. And do make formal professors subject to ordinances of God after the Commandments and Doctrines of men.

This may suffice to evince and demonstrate *That there is a form of Godliness.* And indeed none can Externally worship God without some form of Godliness, wherein Persons do seem to be Religious and may seem to be like God in Holiness and Righteousness both in Worship and Conversation in some measure.

As

As there is the *Form* of Godlineſs, ſo there is the *power* of Godlineſs. The Power of Godlineſs conſiſts, 1. In the truth of Grace. 2. In the lively Acts and Exerciſe of Grace. and 3. In the Growth and perfection of Grace.

The power of Godlineſs conſiſts *firſt*, in the truth of Grace. In whatſoever *form* of Religion any profeſſors worſhip God; yea though that *External* form be ordained of God, inſtituted by Jeſus Chriſt and practiſed by the Apoſtles, Churches and Saints; yet for all this without the Truth of Grace, they are void of the power of Godlineſs. And therefore the primitive Saints did not only receive the Ordinances but the Truth of Grace alſo by the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles in the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, *Col.* 1. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And knew the Grace of God in Truth.

True Grace is the incorruptible ſeed of the New Birth, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. and of the Kingdom of God in the hearts of Believers, *Mat.* 13. 31, 32. which Kingdom of God within us, *Luke* 17. 21. is not in Word only, but in power and in the holy Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 4. 20. & 1 *Theſ.* 1. 4, 5.

Now the Power of Godlineſs doth demonſtrate it ſelf by true ſaving ſanctifying Grace, 1. In denying all ungodlineſs. 2. In

living ſoberly, righteouſly and Godly in this preſent evil World, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. This is the conſtant frame of a Believers heart. He would not ſin, he hates all ſin; He would be holy, he loves holineſs, and deſires to be more holy, *Rom.* 7. 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Secondly, The power of Godlineſs doth conſiſt in the lively Acts and Exerciſe of Grace; as the form of Godlineſs appears in the frequent Exerciſe of holy Duties, ſo doth the power of Godlineſs appear in the lively Acts and Exerciſe of holy Graces, *to wit*, in the life and lively work of faith, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 11, 12. Alſo in the labour of fervent love, 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. Bearing all things, enduring all things with all Brotherly kindneſs, *Rom.* 13. 4, 7. & *Heb.* 6. 10. Likewiſe in the conſtant exerciſe of Patience, humility, meekneſs, and ſelf denyal, taking up the Croſs daily, bearing it patiently, following the ſteps of Chriſt, who humbled himſelf unto death, even the Death of the Croſs: Yea, and he endured the Croſs. Now Believers who have the power of Godlineſs, are armed with the ſame mind, 1 *Pet.* 4. 1. and deſire to be like minded to Chriſt, *Phil.* 2. 5, 8. They ſuffer patiently, knowing that tribulation (*which is the tryal of their faith*) worketh patience, and are delirous that patience may have her perfect work *James* 1. 2, 3, 4.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The Power of Godlineſs doth conſiſt in the growth and perfection of grace, grace is of a growing nature, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. For 1. It grows in its Root which is Jeſus Chriſt, *Col.* 2. 6, 7. As the good ſeed that is ſown in good ground and brings forth fruit, *Luke* 8. 8, 15. The Reaſon why meer formal Profeſſors fall away is, becauſe they are not rooted nor grafted into Chriſt, *Luk.* 8. 13. And the Reaſon why thoſe Believers that are ingrafted into Chriſt, grow as *Cedars* in *Lebanon*, as a green *Olive* Tree in the Houſe of the Lord, and bring forth fruit as the Vine, is becauſe they are trees of Righteouſneſs, the planting of the Lord, *Iſa.* 61. 3. which take Root downward into Chriſt, and ſo bring forth fruit upward by that ſap and nouriſhment which they receive from that ſpiritual Root, *to wit*, thoſe Divine Influences of the Spirit of Grace that they are made partakers of by being ingrafted and rooted into Chriſt. This growth in Grace is very ſecret, hidden, not ſeen nor alwayes diſcerned, like the growth of Corn under ground, or of Trees in Winter, or of the Child in the Womb; yet it doth afterwards appear and is viſible.

2. Grace grows in its lively acts and Exerciſe: As a Child after its natural birth grows in all parts and Members of the Body; ſo a Child of God being regenerated and born

again of the incorruptible ſeed of the Word, doth grow in Grace and in the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt by adding one Grace to another, unto faith, vertue; to vertue, knowledge, temperance, patience, Godlineſs, *&c.* 2 *Pet.* 1. 5——11. This growth in Grace demonſtrates the power of Godlineſs: by this ſpiritual growth in Grace, the weak in faith, *Rom.* 14. 1. become ſtrong in faith, 1 *John* 2. 14. and little faith becomes great faith; like the grain of Muſtard ſeed that becomes a great Tree, and very fruitful, whereunto Chriſt likened the Kingdom of his Grace within us, *Matth.* 13. 31, 32. with *Luk.* 17. 21.

3. Grace grows in its fruits unto perfection, and hereby is the power of Godlineſs demonſtrated, to wit in bringing forth much fruit, *John* 15. 5, 8. *viz.* the fruits of the holy ſpirit, *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. which are the fruits of Holineſs and Righteouſneſs unto Eternal Life, *Rom.* 6. 22. Thus fruitful were the Saints in the Church of the Theſſalonians, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3. And the Apoſtle *Paul* exhorted the primitive Saints to perfect Holineſs in the fear of God, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. And the Apoſtle *Peter* exhorted the called ones of God to be holy in all manner of converſation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15, 16. becauſe he knew that the power of Godlineſs conſiſted in the life of holineſs and righteouſneſs, and is demonſtrated in a holy Converſation.

Thus

Thus it appears, That there is the form of Godlineſs and the power of Godlineſs, which is the firſt propoſition. The ſecond Propoſition is this,

That the Form of Godlineſs may be where the Power of Godlineſs is not.

Simon Magus ſeemed to be religious, He believed and was baptized, and took up the form of Godlineſs, *Act.* 8. 12. But for all this formality he had not the power of Godlineſs, for he was in the gall of Bitterneſs and bond of Iniquity, and his heart was not right with God, *Act.* 8. 21.

Ananias and *Saphira* his wife were both Profeſſors, and Church-members; they had taken upon them the Name of Chriſt and the form of Godlineſs, ſeemed to be very charitable, and pretended much Brotherly Love to the poor Saints, for they ſold a Poſſeſſion, and gave a part of the price thereof unto the poor, *Act.* 5. 1, 2. and yet they were void of the power of Godlineſs.

Profeſſors that are proud, covetous, carnal, covenant-breakers, falſe accuſers, incontinent, fierce, heady, high-minded, Lovers of pleaſures more than Lovers of God, *&c.* Many of them have a form of Godlineſs, but they have not the power of Godlineſs, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 3, 4, 5.

When Profeſſors and Church-Members are generally *formal* in the performance of the duties of Religion, very *perfunctory* and ſuperficial in the Worſhip of God, or Lukewarm neither hot nor cold, *very indifferent* whether they obſerve the Lords Day or another Day, or no day at all to the Lord, ſo whether they hear the Word Preached, pray in their Families or in their Cloſets, or pray not at all, whether they come to the Lords Table or ſtay away, it argues they are ſo far from having *the power of Godlineſs*, that they can *ſcarcely* be ſaid to have *the form of Godlineſs*.

Again when Profeſſors and Members of Churches are very frequent and conſtant in Aſſembling themſelves together to worſhip God, very zealous and preciſe in the External part of the Worſhip of God and ſeem to be very Conſcientious and ſcrupulous in ſuch things as appertain to the form of Godlineſs, aſſerting and contending that all things ought to be exactly done in the Church of God, according to the Rule of the written word of God, and yet walk very diſorderly at home, are heady and unruly in their own houſes, ſet no Rules nor Bounds to their obſtinate and perverſe Wills, to their inordinate and vile affections, to their worldly and covetous hearts, who ſeem to be Religious,

gious yet bridle not their Tongues but deceive their own hearts; *Their Religion is in vain*, James 1. 26. These Professors have a form of Godliness, but they want the power thereof.

Thus it appears that the form of Godliness may be where the power of Godliness is not. Professors may have Leaves without fruit, as the Fig-tree had; Lamps, and lighted, but no Oyle in their Vessels, like the foolish Virgins; seem very Religious in the Congregation of Saints, and be very irreligious in their Conversation among sinners.

The Reasons why Professors rest in and hold up a form of Godliness without the power thereof are these. 1. Because they would have a name to live though they be dead, *Rev* 3. 1. They are very desirous to have a Name in the house of God, to be accounted religious and to be numbred among the Saints; therefore they take up a form of Godliness and rest therein.

Those foolish Professors, *Matth.* 25. 1, 2. had gotten a Name among the wise, and were called *Virgins*. And they seemed to be *Religious*: they had Lamps of Gospel Profession, and the form of Godliness wherewith they were satisfied, and therein they rested securely till the Bridegroom came, and then

it

it appeared they wanted Oyle, that is, the truth of Grace and power of Godlineſs; for want whereof they were excluded and rejected by Jeſus Chriſt, *Matth.* 25. 8, 11, 12.

2. Becauſe a form of Godlineſs will comport with a ſpirit of Wordlineſs, Earthly-mindedneſs, Covetouſneſs, Pride, Uncleanneſs, Drunkenneſs; ſo that theſe Luſts be but ſecretly committed. A Profeſſor and Church-member may be a ſelf-lover and a lover of pleaſures, a Covenant or Promiſe-breaker, and yet have and hold up a form of Godlineſs without the power thereof, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1——5.

3. Becauſe Profeſſors and Church-members may avoid troubles and perſecutions, whileſt they enjoy Sabbaths, Sermons, and Ordinances in an External form of publick Worſhip; Whereas the power of Godlineſs will expoſe them to ſuffer perſecution, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. So that the Form of Godlineſs may be where the power is not. This is the ſecond Propoſition. There is a Third Propoſition, *viz.*

That ſome Profeſſors and Church-members having and holding up the form of Godlineſs, deny the power thereof.

Profeſſors they muſt be and Church-members they may be, that have and hold up the

form

form of Godlineſs, and ſeem to be very devout and Religious in the Worſhip of God, and yet ſome of them deny the power of Godlineſs. We have ſhewed in the handling of the firſt propoſition wherein the form of Godlineſs and wherein the power of Godlineſs doth conſiſt, and have treated briefly both of the form and power of Godlineſs. Now it remains, That in handling this Third Propoſition, *we ſhew*, 1. *what it is to deny the power of Godlineſs.*

2. *The Reaſons why they deny the Power of Godlineſs.*

To deny the power of Godlineſs, is 1. To have an Averſation againſt it in their Affections, not to love and affect the power of Godlineſs; which Averſation againſt the power of Godlineſs doth ariſe and ſpring from that curſed and ſinful Enmity in their carnal minds againſt God, Rom. 8. 7. *The carnal mind is Enmity againſt God*, and therefore carnal Profeſſors do not love nor like Godlineſs in the Truth and power of it, though they may be found in the form and profeſſion thereof. O, ſaith a formal profeſſor in his heart, I do not love this preciſeneſs, this is to be righteous overmuch. I like not thoſe that are ſo ſtrict, ſo zealous and ſo ſcrupulouſly conſcientious. What neceſſity is there to deny my ſelf, my Liberty, my lawful Recreation, content and delight

delight in things indifferent? must my liberty therein be judged by another Brothers or Sisters Conscience? He loves not, he likes not this, it crosseth his Interest in the World, or it is contrary unto some of his beloved and indulged Lusts to be so zealous, so Religious, so Conscientious as the power of Godliness requireth, and would ingage him to be, therefore he is averse from it, and so may be said to deny it.

To deny the power of Godliness, is 2. To Refuse all the offers of Christ and Grace, which God makes them in the ministry and administration of the Gospel by his holy Spirit, Isa 53. 1, 2, 3 Act. 3. 13, 14. *But ye denyed the Holy ONE.* That is, they refused Christ, and would not have him to be their Saviour, King, Priest and Prophet, saying, *We will not have this man to Reign over us.* Formal Professors know not the worth of Christ, they are not sensible of their want of Grace, therefore they slight, neglect and refuse the Offers of Grace. They are willing to seem Religious, but as for the truth of Grace and power of Godliness they regard it not. They like Christ as a Saviour but refuse him as a Soveraign; though they would be saved, they care not to be sanctified; they refuse to enter in at the strait gate of Grace, and to walk in the narrow way of holiness.

and

and yet they would go to Heaven, and to that end they cry, Lord, Lord, *Matth.* 7. 21, 22. They pray, and Propheſie in Chriſts name, *Luke* 13. 23, 27. They worſhip God, ſeem to be very religious and partake of all Gods holy Ordinances, having a form of Godlineſs, but yet they deny the power of Godlineſs by refuſing the offers of Chriſt and Grace in the Goſpel and Ordinances of God.

To deny the power of Godlineſs is, 3. To live in the practice of known ſins, ſecretly indulging and allowing them, Tit. 1. 16. *They profeſs that they know God, but in Works they deny him.*

When Profeſſors Lives are looſe, carnal, worldly, and their works are the works of Darkneſs, and they themſelves workers of Iniquity, they deny God and the power of Godlineſs.

The power of Godlineſs conſiſts in practical Holineſs. Some Profeſſors ſeem to be holy in Gods houſe, who live very ungodly in their own houſes. They ſeem to be religious in the Church and in the Worſhip of God, but they are irreligious at home, in their Shops and Callings, Trading and Living in ſin, and ungodlineſs. Theſe having a form of Godlineſs deny the power thereof.

Now the Reaſons why *Formal Profeſſors deny the power of Godlineſs*, are 1. Becauſe their

their hearts are not right with God; *Simon Magus* Believed and was baptized, and worshipped God, but his heart was not right with God, *Act.* 8. 21, 23. There is a carnal Enmity in their hearts against God, and the power of Godliness; *Rom.* 8. 7. though they like the outward form, yet they love not the inward power of Godliness.

2. Because the inward power of Godliness is cross to their outward and worldly Interests, therefore they deny the power thereof. The Formalist saith within himself, though I be religious, a Church-member, &c. yet I am resolved to make my Religion and Church-fellowship comport with my Interest in the world, and to be subservient unto my Honour, Credit, Profit, yea and my pleasure, delight and contentment, &c.

When formal Professors discern that the power of Godliness will not only check and curb their vile affections, perverse wills, and sinful desires, but also will mortifie, kill and destroy their Lusts and Corruptions, root and branch, then they refuse and deny the power of Godliness.

Rather than the Formalist will hazard the loss of Life, Liberty or Estate, and expose himself to poverty, prison, banishment or death for his Religion, he will deny Christ, deny God and the power of Godliness.

3. Because

3. Becauſe the power of Godlineſs engageth profeſſors to follow Holineſs, and to deny all ungodlineſs, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. Such Profeſſors as have the form of Godlineſs only, are very apt to reſt in the external part and performance of holy duties and ſacred Ordinances without the injoyment of God and Jeſus Chriſt. But the truth and Life of Grace and the power of Godlineſs will not ſuffer the ſoul to reſt in duties and Ordinances without the injoyment of fellowſhip and Communion with God, therefore the Formaliſt will not cloſe with the power of Godlineſs, but refuſeth and denyeth it, becauſe he is unwilling to leave his ſins. I ſhall now make ſome application of what I have ſaid touching the form and power of Godlineſs.

1. *Uſe* of Inſtruction to Virgin Profeſſors.

There are three things neceſſary unto the *form* of Godlineſs, *viz.* 1. The knowledge of the Revealed Will of God in his written Word touching Chriſts Inſtitution of Goſpel Ordinances, and his Conſtitution of the Worſhip of God therein, and thereby. How can any perſon worſhip God in ſpirit and truth (*as true worſhippers ought to do*, Joh. 4.23,24.) unleſs they underſtand and know the truth, revealed in the holy Scriptures?

Ignorant perſons are not capable to perform

form the external part of the worſhip of God; for they do not know it. The Athenians worſhipped the unknown God, which the Apoſtle told them was their great ſuperſtition, *Act.* 17. 22, 23. And our Saviour told the Woman of *Samaria*, that the Samaritans worſhip they know not what, *Joh.* 4. 21, 22. So then knowledge is neceſſary unto the form of Godlineſs.

Many perſons think it is enough that their Miniſters know how they ought to worſhip God, and ſo are willingly ignorant, whoſe fear towards God is taught by the precepts of men, and they willingly walk after the Commandment, *Hoſ.* 5. 11. which formality of Conformity Chriſt reprehended. Matth. 15. 9. *In vain they do worſhip me teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of men.*

2. In the *form* of Godlineſs there muſt be a Conformity unto the Revealed Will of God in his Word, eſpecially in the External part of the Inſtituted worſhip of God in the Goſpel.

Uniformity in Worſhip in any Nation or Congregation without Conformity unto the *Rule* or *Canon* of the holy Scripture, is but ſuperſtition and a worſhipping God after the Inventions and Traditions of men, which the Apoſtle reproved in the Coloſſians, and calls *Will-worſhip*, Col. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23.

The

The Temple, the Altar and they that worship, (*that is, the Church, the worship of God and the worshippers of God*) are to be measured by the Reed or Rod of the Sanctuary, that is, by the written word of God, *Rev.* 11. 1. *Moses* was commanded to do all things according to the pattern that God shewed him in the Mount, *Heb.* 8. 5. and the Prophet *Ezekiel* was commanded to shew the House of Gods worship to the House of *Israel* and admonished them to measure the pattern, *Ezek.* 43. 10.

3. In the Form of Godliness there ought to be an Uniformity among all the Churches of God in every Nation, in every City and in every Village. All that worship God in one place, are to Worship him in one way, with one accord and with one shoulder. It was so in the Apostles dayes, *Act.* 1. 4, 24. *Phil.* 2. 2. *Being of one accord, of one mind*, Act. 4. 32. And so it shall be in the last dayes, Jer. 32. 36, 38, 39. *And I will give them one heart, and one way that they may fear me*, (*i.e.*) worship me, *for ever*.

This Uniformity was *tacitly* hinted by the Apostle, in reproving the Confusion that was in the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 14. 26, 33. *for God is not the Author of Confusion but of Peace*, As in all the Churches of Saints.

Uniformity in Worship not after the In-

vention of men, but according to the written Word of God makes for Peace, Unity and Edification in the Churches of Saints, and is a special means to avoid confusion and disorder in the Worship of God, 1 *Cor.* 14. 40.

2. *Use* of Conviction, 1. Of those foolish Virgin-professors who rest in the form of Godliness without the power of it. They may hereby be convinced, 1. That their hearts are not right with God, though they do *materially* that which is right in the sight of God; but are like *Amaziah* who *did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart*, 2 Chron. 15. 1, 2. And whosoever rests in a form of Godliness, without the power thereof, deceiveth his own heart, and his Religion is in vain, *James* 1. 26.

Such may be convinced, 2. That in all their solemn appearings before God, and their approachings nigh unto him, their hearts are far from him, *Isa.* 29. 13. and *Matth.* 15. 8. And testifies that all their worship is in vain, *Matth.* 15, 8, 9. And they themselves Hypocrites, *vers.* 7. As the heart is, so is the Worshipper in the sight of God. If the heart be proud, covetous, vain, foolish, luke-warm, formal and hypocritical, all that Professors duties, performances and worship is abhorred

of

of God, his ſoul hateth them. Iſa. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15. and Chap. 66. ver. 3. *Bring no more vain oblations, incenſe is an abomination to me, the New Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Aſſemblies, I cannot away with. It is iniquity, even the ſolemn meetings,* ——*Your New Moons and your appointed feaſts my ſoul hateth, they are a trouble unto me, I am aweary to bear them.* ——And when ye *ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine Eyes from you; yea when you make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. He that killeth an Ox is as if he ſlew a man, he that ſacrificeth a Lamb as if he cut off a dogs neck, he that offereth an oblation as if he offered ſwines blood, he that burneth Incenſe as if he bleſſed an Idol; yea they have choſen their own wayes, and their ſoul delighteth in their Abominations.*

They may be convinced, 3. That they ſhall never ſee God in Heaven, Heb. 12. 14. *for without Holineſs* (the power of Godlineſs) *no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* They are declared by God in his Word to be Hypocrites, *Matth.* 15. 7, 8, 9. and if they Repent not, they ſhall have their portion with Hypocrites, *Matth.* 24. 51. in the loweſt and deepeſt of eternal flames, and of everlaſting darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.

3. *Vſe* of Conſolation unto the Wiſe Virgins. Art thou an Iſraelite indeed? Doſt thou worſhip God in Spirit and Truth? Haſt thou both the form and power of Godlineſs? Then be of good Comfort. For, 1. Chriſt is thine, and all is thine, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23. God is thy Father, Grace is thy portion, and Heaven is thine Inheritance, Holineſs is thy way, and Happineſs will be thine end, *Matth.* 5. 8.

2. Thou doſt and ſhalt enjoy ſpiritual Communion with God in holy duties, and in his ſacred Ordinances. The power of Godlineſs doth make the Believer fruitful under that form of Godlineſs which Chriſt hath Inſtituted for the Worſhip of God; and affords him fellowſhip with the Father, Son and Spirit, 1 *Joh.* 1. 1, 2, 3.

3. Know for thy comfort, That the power of Sin, Satan, Hell cannot, ſhall not prevail againſt the power of Godlineſs in thee, ſo far as to provoke the Lord to forſake thee for ever, or to cauſe thee to forſake God for ever, for He hath ſaid, *Heb.* 1. 3, 5. I will never leave thee, never never forſake thee. Read for thy Comfort Jer. 32. 38, 40. *And they ſhall not depart from me.* But the power of Godlineſs in thee will by the power of Chriſt prevail againſt, conquer and overcome the power of darkneſs, and all the wiles of the wicked one,

1 *Joh.*

1 *Joh.* 2. 13. alſo the power of this world, *Eph.* 6. 12, 13. and the threats, allurements, *&c.* thereof, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5. And likewiſe the power of ſin, both the reigning power thereof (called the *Dominion of ſin*) Rom. 6. 14. ſin ſhall not have Dominion over you, becauſe ye are not under the Law, but under Grace; and the Tyrannizing power thereof (called the captivity of ſin) Rom. 7. 2, 3. & 8. 2. *But the Law of the Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the Law of ſin and Death.* Rejoice therefore in the Lord and bleſs him, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8.

4. *Uſe* of Exhortation, 1. To the Prophane.
2. To Profeſſors.
And 3. To true Believers.

1. A word to all prophane perſons who have neither the power nor the form of Godlineſs; I exhort ſuch to conſider their woful ſtate and miſerable condition, being all of them without Chriſt, having no hope, and without God in the World, *Epheſ.* 2. 12. *David* tells prophane ſinners, The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the People that forget God, *Pſal.* 9. 17. You can live without Chriſt, trade without Chriſt, marry and give in marriage without Chriſt; But tell me, you prophane ſinners, what will you do if you dye without Chriſt? can you think

ſeriouſly of going to Hell, and being tormented there to Eternity? will the Enjoyment of the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon compenſate the loſs of your ſouls, and the pains of Hell for ever?

Secondly, A word to the fooliſh Virgin Profeſſors who having a form of Godlineſs deny the power thereof. I exhort ſuch to conſider ſeriouſly whether ſeeming to be Religious, and ſaying Lord, Lord, will ſave your immortal ſouls, Matth. 7. 21, 22, 23. *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven——— Many will ſay to me in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name have caſt out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful works? —— And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye that work Iniquity.* Remember Profeſſors that the fooliſh Virgins had their Lamps lighted, and they ſhined in the form of Godlineſs, but they found the Door of the Kingdom of Heaven ſhut againſt them. And when they ſaid Lord, Lord, open to us, Chriſt ſaid unto them, I know you not, *Matth.* 25. 10, 11, 12. becauſe they had not the power of Godlineſs, Luk. 13. 24, 28. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, for many I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter*

in,

in, and ſhall not be able. —— *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth, when ye ſhall ſee* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob, *and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you your ſelves ſhut out.*

Do not reſt in a form, without the power of Godlineſs, leſt you ſitting down in any Church of Saints and under the Sacred Ordinances of God without Chriſt, come ſhort of Heaven, for without Holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord, *Heb.* 12. 14. The Kingdom of God is not in word but in power, 1 *Cor.* 4. 20.

Thirdly, A Word to the wiſe Virgins that have not only the Form but the power of Godlineſs, whom I exhort, 1. To exerciſe the power of Godlineſs in the performance of holy Duties and in partaking of Gods holy Ordinances, and not to reſt in the form and external part of the Worſhip of God. 2. To Demonſtrate unto all that you have the power of Godlineſs by being holy in all manner of Converſation, both in the houſe of God, and in your own houſes, ſhewing forth the vertue of him that hath called you; whereby the Faith, Humility, Self-denyal, Patience, the Love and Life of Jeſus Chriſt may be manifeſted in your Life.

Quere 1. *How may Professors attain unto the power of Godliness and so become wise Virgins.*

Sol. 1. Professors must come to Christ in the Ordinances of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 18, 24. Christ complained of the Jewish Professors that they would not come to him, *Joh.* 5. 40. many come to Sermons, to Duties, to Ordinances, but few come to Christ, most rest in the form without the power of Godliness, satisfying themselves in coming to Sermons, and attending upon Ordinances, without going to Christ in them, *Isa.* 55. 3.

2. The Gospel must come to professors not in word only, but also in power and in the holy Spirit, 1 *Thes.* 1. 5. before they can come to Christ or attain to the power of Godliness.

3. The Ministers of Christ must declare the Testimony of God not with excellency of speech, nor with enticing words of Mans Wisdom, but their speech and their preaching must be in the Demonstration of the spirit and in power, 1 *Cor.* 2. 1, 2, 4, 5. before the Gospel can come to their hearers hearts in power and in the holy Spirit, and before their hearers can come to Christ, and before they can attain to the power of Godliness. The plain and powerful preaching of the

Gospel

Gospel is the ordinary means whereby God draws sinners with Cords of Love to Christ, and makes the Ministry of the word powerful and effectual to call, convert, sanctifie and save sinners, *Rom.* 1. 16, 17. *Rom.* 10. 14, 17.

Querie 2. *How may Professors know, That they have attained unto the power of Godliness, and that they are wise Virgins.*

Sol. Professors may know, That they have attained unto the power of Godliness, and are wise Virgins, 1. By the Victory they have obtained over the World, Satan, and their own sins. There's none but true Believers have overcome the world, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5. None but those that are strong in faith have overcome the Devil that wicked one, 1 *John* 2. 14. It's the truth of faith, and the power of Godliness, whereby sanctified persons do overcome their sinful Lusts and Corruptions; the Grace of God teacheth all men to deny ungodliness and worldly Lusts, *Tit.* 2. 12.

2. By the lively Acts and constant exercise of Grace. In whomsoever the power of Godliness is, it will appear in the growth and exercise of Grace, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. Such Christians are fruitful under Gods holy Ordi-

nances,

nances, *Joh.* 15. 5. The Gospel came to them not in word only but in power and in the holy Spirit, 1 *Thes.* 1. 5. and their faith did grow exceedingly, and the Love of them all exceeded, 2 *Thes.* 2. 3.

3. By their holy Conversation in the World, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *This is our Rejoycing, the Testimony of our Conscience that in simplicity and Godly sincerity by the grace of God we have our Conversation in the World.* The power of Godliness will appear in a holy life and heavenly Conversation, as it did in the primitive Saints, *Phil.* 3. 20. whereunto they were exhorted, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15. *viz.* to be holy in all manner of Conversation.

Querie 3. *Are they, that have the power of Godliness, obliged to the form of Godliness?*

Sol. Yea, the Apostle commended the Church and Saints in *Corinth* for keeping the Ordinances of God, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1, 2. and the Apostle *Peter* commanded them to be baptized with water, who had received the holy Spirit, *Act.* 10. 47, 48. All the Apostles, the Churches of Saints, and all true Believers looked at themselves to be obliged to the external form of Godliness and worship of God in external Gospel Ordinances, as it appears in the Acts of the Apostles and in their Epistles.

Vers. 5.

Verſ. 5. *While the Bride-groom tarried, they all ſlumbered and ſlept.*

The *Bride-groom* is the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *verſ.* 1. who is here ſaid *to tarry* or delay his coming, *Chap.* 24. 48. which he will not do in reſpect of the time appointed of the Father. Then he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry, *Heb.* 10. 37. But Chriſt is ſaid to tarry or delay his coming;

1. Becauſe He came not when they prayed for his coming, and earneſtly deſired his preſence and appearance: thus Jeſus tarried two dayes after *Lazarus* Siſters had ſent him word that he was ſick, *Joh.* 11. 1, 3. 6. and yet came in due time and manifeſted himſelf with power and great glory in raiſing *Lazarus* from the Dead, *ver.* 23. 40, 43, 44.

2. Becauſe He came not when they looked for him, and at the time when they expected his coming. The Apoſtle tells us, Heb. 9. 28. *Unto them that look for him he ſhall appear the ſecond time without ſin unto Salvation.* But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father, ſaid Chriſt, *Matth.* 24. 36.

They all ſlumbred and ſlept. All the Virgins, both the fooliſh and the Wiſe Virgins.

Firſt,

Firſt, They all ſlumbred or nodded, that is to ſay, they did not wake and watch as formerly they had done, while they waited for and expected the glorious appearance of their LORD, and bare their teſtimony of his coming; but began to be careleſs and ſecure, neglecting their Duty, they became drowſie and indiſpoſed to wait any longer for the coming of the Bride-groom, grew weary, ſilent and ſleepy as the Spouſe did, *Cant.* 4. 16. 5. 1, 2. between her intreating and inviting her Beloved to come into his Garden, and his coming, *I ſleep but my heart waketh*, ver. 2.

Secondly, They all ſlept, or were faſt aſleep, *that is to ſay*, the wiſe Virgins as well as the fooliſh were fallen into a ſtate of ſecurity, *as perſons are when they are faſt aſleep in the night ſeaſon*, fearing neither Fire, thieves or any other danger. So all theſe ten Virgins (*it being now near Mid night*) were faſt aſleep (*as it were in a dead ſleep*) through their carnal ſecurity, and careleſs neglect of their Watch and other Holy Duties. And ſome of them backſlide into a deep Apoſtaſie, and ſo continued till the Cry at Mid-night awaked them out of that deep ſleep of carnal ſecurity, backſliding and apoſtaſie, into which they were fallen, as appears in the 6 and 7 verſes of this Chapter.

Meditation. Many Virgin-professors being mistaken about this time of Christs coming, *who tarried longer than they expected*, will fall into the slumber of sinful silence and careless security. And some Professors will fall into a dead and deadly sleep of Backsliding and Apostasie. *This Meditation consists of four Propositions.*

First, Many Virgin-professors have been and are mistaken about this time of Christs coming. And that doth appear by what many learned and Godly men have written and witnessed touching the coming of Christ, *many* have looked for the coming of Christ, as the Judge of quick and dead, 2 Tim. 4. 1. *I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom.* And that at the end of the World, 2 *Pet.* 3. 3, 10, 12. When he shall give up his Kingdom to the Father, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24——28. But few have expected the coming of Christ as the Bride-groom, and the *New Jerusalem* to come down from Heaven as a Bride adorned for her Husband, *Rev.* 21. 1, 2. Who looks for the Marriage of the Lamb? and who will grant that his Bride shall make her self ready, *Rev.* 14. 7, 8. to be married to Christ and to live and reign with Christ a thousand years here on Earth between the

final

final destruction of the Beast and the false Prophet and the Eternal Judgement of the last Day, *Rev.* 20. 4. But more will be spoken of the coming of Christ in the Exposition of the next verse.

Secondly, The Bride-groom tarryed longer than the Virgins expected, *while the Bridegroom tarried*, saith the Text; They expected his coming while they were awake, watching and witnessing, praying and looking for him, but He tarried till they all slumbred and slept. And then He came at Mid-night, *ver.* 6. at an hour (in a Dispensation) when they looked not for him. Matth. 24. 44, 50. *Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh.* —— *The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of.* Matth. 25. 13. *Watch therefore for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.* And 1 Thes. 5. 2. *For your selves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.*

Thirdly, The generality of Virgin-professors will fall into the slumber of a sinful silence, neglect to watch and wait for the spiritual Bride-groom; and grow careless and secure whilest he tarries.

So

So long as Virgin-profeſſors will be ſpeaking of Chriſts Coming and Kingdom, and talking of his power (as was propheſied the later day Saints ſhall do, *Pſal.* 145. 11.) whileſt they are praying continually for the coming and Kingdom of Chriſt (as He taught his Diſciples to pray, Matth. 6. 10. *Thy Kingdom come*:) And whileſt they are watching and waiting for the Lord from Heaven in his glorious appearance with Kingly power and Majeſty, as the Saints were exhorted by the Apoſtle to do, 1 Theſ. 1. 9, 10. *To ſerve the living God and to wait for his Son from Heaven*; I ſay, ſo long as Virgin-profeſſors are ſo doing, they will not, cannot, ſhall not ſlumber nor ſleep. But when they begin to be ſilent in bearing their Teſtimony for the Kingdom of Chriſt againſt the Kingdom of Antichriſt, and will not, dare not ſpeak of his glorious coming and Kingdom as the Bride-groom, but give over praying for it, and waiting for him; Then they begin to be careleſs of his coming, and to grow ſecure, *and being at eaſe in Zion*, begin to ſlumber, and at laſt ſome of them fall faſt aſleep.

Fourthly, Some Profeſſors will fall into a deep and deadly ſleep of Backſliding and Apoſtaſie. As ſome of the later day Saints will be ſhining Believers, *Iſa.* 60. 1, 2. So ſome

some of the Virgin Professors in the last days will prove backsliding formalists and damnable Apostates, and this grand and greatest Apostasie hath these four steps or gradations. 1. A liberal inordinate resting and reposing their hearts in and upon worldly contentments. 2. A cooling in their Affections and careless neglect of holy duties, Ordinances and the pure worship of God. 3. A fearlesness of declining and backsliding. 4. A Benummed deadness, hardness, insensibleness, security and contentedness, being at ease and rest, and so fall asleep in that condition, and this will happen a little before the coming of Christ, 2 Thes. 1, 2, 3. *Now we beseech you Brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together in him* ——— *That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit nor by word, nor by letters as from us, that the day of Christ is at hand* ——— *Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.* This Apostasie was foretold also by the Apostle *Peter* in his second Epistle the third Chapter, and the 3 and 4 verses. *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last dayes Scoffers, walking after their own Lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming;*

for

for ſince the Fathers fell aſleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation. The Apoſtle *Paul* alſo foretold *Timothy*, that in the laſt dayes, *(which will be perillous times)* Men eminent for profeſſion, *(having the form of Godlineſs)* will deny the power thereof through their own Luſts, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. There are two Expreſſions uſed by both thoſe Apoſtles touching this grand and laſt Apoſtaſie which doth confirm my opinion, that they both propheſied and writ of the ſame Apoſtaſie. *Paul* ſaith, 2 Tim. 3. 1. *This know alſo that in the laſt dayes.* And *Peter* ſaith, 1 *Pet.* 3. 3. *Knowing that firſt* ——— *that in the later dayes*, &c.

The Root of this grand and laſt Apoſtaſie is ſelf-love, and love of pleaſures, which the Apoſtle in his Epiſtle to *Timothy* notes to be the chief Character of the formal Profeſſors and Apoſtates in the laſt dayes, 2 Tim. 3. 2, 4. οἱ ἄνθρωποι φίλαυτοι, καὶ φιλήδονοι, The men of Name ſhall be *Lovers of their own ſelves and Lovers of pleaſures, more than Lovers of God.* Theſe ſinful Pleaſures, and worldly Contents cauſe Profeſſors to ſlumber, and ſome to fall faſt aſleep in Apoſtaſie, Self-love is that Root of bitterneſs out of which thoſe unbleſſed, yea thoſe curſed Branches of ſinful luſts *(there mentioned)* do ſprout and

grow, *especially* Covetousness, Pride and Covenant-breaking. And the Love of Pleasures is the corrupt fountain from whence the bitter waters of those sinful Lusts spring and flow.

Let him that hath understanding judge what I say. If MEN not prosane *only* but Professors *also*, not only the men of the world, but also members of Churches do love themselves more than truth and Righteousness, and love the world more than faith and a good Conscience, yea love their vain sinful delights and pleasures more than God and Jesus Christ, may not those and such as those be ranked and numbred among the Apostates and Backsliders of the last dayes? By how much the more we see and know men that have been very eminent in profession above many others, and have been highly esteemed in the Churches of Saints, *men of name*, Chief men among the Brethren, yea among the Elders for knowledge, Gifts, Zeal, *&c.* who have born a glorious Testimony for Christ against Antichrist: But yet they have afterwards (*through love of themselves and love of pleasures and other sinful Lusts*) Backslided, Revolted and Apostatized from what they formerly practised and professed before many Witnesses; may we not conclude them to be among the number of the Apostates of the last dayes?

Vers.

Verſ. 6. *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bride-groom cometh, go ye out to meet him.*

1. Night doth Myſtically and Metaphorically ſignifie a time of Reſt, Eaſe and Quietneſs, alſo drowſineſs, ſluggiſhneſs, and a lazing diſpoſition; likewiſe a condition of a ſinful careleſs ſecurity, Rom. 10. 11, 12. *And that knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of ſleep, for now is our Salvation nearer than when we believed——— The Night is far ſpent, the day is at hand, let us therefore caſt off the works of darkneſs, and let us put on the Armour of light.——* 1 Theſ. 5. 2, 6, 7. *For your ſelves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night——— Therefore let us not ſleep as do others, but let us watch and be ſober—— For they that ſleep, ſleep in the night, and they that are drunken are drunken in the night———* Matth. 24. 48, 49, 50. *But and if that evil ſervant ſhall ſay in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and ſhall begin to ſmite his fellow ſervants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, The Lord of that ſervant ſhall come in a day when he looketh not for him and in an hour that he is not aware of.*

2. A condition and time of great darkneſs, diſcomfort, ſore Afflictions and heavy Judgements, Exod. 12. 29. *And it came to paſs, That at Midnight the* LORD *ſmote all the firſt Born in the Land of Egypt:* Mich. 3. 6, 7. *Therefore Night ſhall be unto you, that ye ſhall not have a Viſion, and it ſhall be dark unto you that ye ſhall not divine, and the Sun ſhall go down over the Prophets and the day ſhall be dark over them——— Then ſhall the Seers be aſhamed, and the Diviners confounded, yea they ſhall cover their Lips, for there is no Anſwer of God.* Joel 3. 1. *Gird your ſelves and lament ye Prieſts, howle ye Miniſters of the Altar: come lye all night in ſackcloth ye Miniſters of my God; for the Meat-offering and the Drink-offering is withholden from the houſe of your God.*

3. A time of greateſt retirement and repoſe for moſt ſerious devotion and ſpiritual Meditation, and holy Contemplation, Pſal. 4. 4. *Commune with your own heart upon your Bed, and be ſtill,* &c. Pſal. 16. 7. *My reins ſhall inſtruct me in the night ſeaſon:* Cant. 3. 1. *By night on my Bed I ſought him whom my Soul loveth, I ſought him but found him not.*

This Midnight Diſpenſation in the text doth *Myſtically and Metaphorically* ſignifie all theſe three particular conditions at the time of the *Bridegroom's* coming, with reſpect to the

ſeveral

ſeveral ſorts of perſons, who will be then and in that day concerned therein, *viz. Firſt*, The fooliſh Virgins will then be found in a ſlaggiſh diſpoſition and condition of a ſinful careleſs ſecurity, ſo ſleepy that their Lamps go out, *ver.* 8. And the Wiſe Virgins will be too ſecure and careleſs at that time, *ver.* 5.

Secondly, Worldly Profeſſors who are taught to Worſhip God according to the Commandments and precepts of men, and the Inventions and Superſtitions of men will then be found under great darkneſs, diſcomfort and amazement, Luk. 21. 25, 26, 27. *And there ſhall be ſigns in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, and upon the Earth diſtreſs of Nations with perplexity, the Sea and the Waves roaring* —— *Mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which are coming on the Earth, for the powers of Heaven ſhall be ſhaken* —— *And then ſhall they ſee the Son of Man coming in a Cloud with power and great glory*; Becauſe of the ſore Afflictions and Righteous Judgements of God, Matth. 24. 21, 29, 30. *For then ſhall be great tribulation. ſuch as was not from the beginning of the World to this time, no nor ever ſhall be* —— *Immediately after the tribulation of thoſe dayes ſhall the Sun be darkened, and the Moon ſhall not give her light, and the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and the powers of the Heavens*

ſhall be ſhaken——— And then ſhall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and they ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven with power and great glory.

Thirdly, There will be ſome, a few, a ſmall Remnant of Virgin Saints who will accompany the Bridegroom when he comes, *even in the midnight diſpenſation*, and they are thoſe hundred forty four thouſand who have their Fathers name written in their foreheads, *Rev.* 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. being in their retirement, repoſe and ſecret devotion *formerly* ſealed for the Servants of God, *Rev.* 7. 3, 4. And now come with the Bridegroom and ſhall ſtand with the Lamb upon Mount *Sion* being without fault before the Throne of God.

There was a Cry made, &c.

The Queſtion is, 1. What *Cry* this was? 2. Who made this *Cry*? 3. Who heard this *Cry*?

Touching the *firſt* Queſtion, What Cry this was, I anſwer the Greek word (κραυγὴ) doth both here and in many other places of Scripture ſignifie a very loud, fierce and vehement Cry, as Act. 7. 57. *They cryed out with a loud voice*, Act. 19. 28. As an *Herauld* at Arms cries out with a loud voice when he proclaims an Edict, or when the common Cryer makes proclamation, Rev. 7. 2. *He cryed with a loud voice*, &c. and Rev. 10. 3. Rev. 19. 17.

Touching

Touching the second Question, *Who made this Cry*, I answer, either the LORD himself, or the Ministers of Christ, or the people of God.

For this *Cry* is *either* by Preaching the coming of Christ publickly, Isa. 58. 1. *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a Trumpet*, &c. *Matth.* 24. 14. And the Gospel of the Kingdom (κηρυχθήσεται) shall be proclaimed or preached publickly (ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ οἰκουμένῃ) in all the inhabited world, or else a Cry raised by the voice of a great number of the Saints and Servants of God in the Temple of God that was opened in Heaven, Isa. 66. 6. *A voice of the* LORD *a voice from the Temple*, after the Resurrection of the two prophetical Witnesses of Christ which the Beast had killed, compare Rev. 11. 7, 11, 12, 17, 19. *And they heard a great voice from Heaven, saying unto them, come up hither*, ver. 12. with Rev. 19. 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. *And a voice came out of the Throne, and I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, saying* Alleluja, *for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give honour to him, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come. Blessed are they that are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. These are the true sayings of God*, or by the Lord himself, *Joel* 3. 16. Jehovah *also shall*

roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the Heaven and the Earth shall shake, read Hag. 2. 6, 7. and Heb. 12. 26, 27. and ver. 25. *see that ye refuse not him that speaketh from Heaven.*

Touching the *third* Question, *Who heard the Cry?* I Answer, All the Virgins both wise and foolish heard this Cry, *The Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him*, as appears in the next *verse*. For they all (being *awakened* by that loud Cry) rose and trimmed their Lamps, *ver.* 7. and *probably* there were many others, even great multitudes that heard this Cry or Proclamation of the Bridegrooms coming, who were glad and rejoyced that the Marriage of the Lamb was come, and that doth appear by what is propheſied and recorded *Rev.* 19. 1. to the 9 *verse*.

The sum and substance of this Cry is contained in these words, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him*, Wherein are three things to be observed, *viz.* 1. The Attention, *Behold.* 2. The Assertion, *The Bridegroom cometh.* 3. The Obligation or Duty Enjoyned and Commanded, *Go ye out to meet him.*

When God would have some wonderful and glorious thing made known unto the world and unto his people, He stirs up their Attention by this word, *Behold*, *Isa.* 65. 1.

Zeph.

Zeph. 3. 19. 1 *Cor.* 15. 21, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, *Rev.* 15. 5. & 21. 5. especially when God speaks of his Son Jesus Christ, *Isa.* 28. 16. *Joh.* 1. 29. *Rev.* 1. 7, 16. 15. 22. 7. *Behold he cometh*, &c. *Behold I come quickly.* So in the text, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh.* This is a matter which is worthy of, and calls for the Churches, Ministers and Saints Attention.

The Bridegoom cometh.

It's not said HE will come, though that is true, *Heb.* 10. 37. Yet a little while and *HE that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.* But HE cometh (ἔρχεται) HE is upon his March, *Rev.* 19. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. HE hath been coming a great while, HE went forth long ago, *Rev.* 6. 2. and now He is very near even at the Door ready to enter into the Bride-chamber; Only HE stands and stayes at the Door till the Bride have made her self ready, Rev. 19. 7, 8. ver. 10. of this Chapter, *And they that were ready went in with him to the Marriage and the Door was shut.*

Seeing that many both Learned and Godly men have been mistaken in their Opinions about the coming of Christ as was hinted in the Exposition of the former Verse; It concerns the Churches of Saints, the Ministers of Christ, and all *sanctified* Believers to search

the

the holy Scriptures and pray that God will by his holy Spirit open the Scriptures to us, and open our understanding thereby in this his coming.

And now let not the Churches Ministers, nor any of the Saints be offended with me for shewing my Opinion, touching this coming of Christ and the Scripture grounds and Reasons for the same, which I humbly offer with all submission unto their Judgement.

I do believe and am perswaded that the coming of Christ (spoken of in this Parable, *ver.* 6. 10.) is not the coming of Christ in his own person upon the Earth (though I do believe Christ will come the second time in his own person upon the Earth, *Heb.*9.28. *Zach.*3.4,5.) but this is his virtual, spiritual, powerful and glorious coming in his Saints and Sanction *as the Bridegroom of his Church, the new Jerusalem, who shall also come down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride adorned for her husband.* Our *Davids* Mystical Kingdom on Earth among his Saints, when HE shall be King of all the Earth, and all the Kingdoms of this world shall be Christs. And when the Lords redeemed Ones, whom HE hath made Kings and Priests to God, shall have the Kingdom and Dominion under the whole Heaven given to them, and they shall reign on Earth,

And

And the reaſons grounded on Scripture are as followeth. 1. Negatively. 2. Affirmatively.

Negatively, That the coming of Chriſt ſpoken of in the 6 & 10 verſes of this Parable is not the coming of Chriſt in his own perſon upon the Earth. *Firſt*, Becauſe at the perſonal coming of Chriſt on Earth, (called his appearing the *Second* time, *Heb.* 9. 28.) all his Saints ſhall come with him, Zach. 14. 5. *And Jehovah my God ſhall come and all the Saints with thee*, 1 Theſ. 3. 13. At the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt with all *his Saints*. The living Bodies of the Saints ſhall be changed and glorified. And the Bodies of the Saints deceaſed ſhall then be raiſed and alſo glorified, Phil. 3. 20, 21. *For our Converſation is in Heaven, from whence alſo we look for the Saviour our Lord Jeſus Chriſt—— who ſhall change our vile body that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things unto himſelf.* 1 Theſ. 4. 14, 15, 16, 17. *For if we believe, That Jeſus died and roſe again, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him. For this we ſay unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep—— For the Lord himſelf*

ſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a ſhout with the voice of the Arch-angel and with the Trump of God, and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt —— *Then we which are alive and remain ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds to meet the Lord in the Aire, and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.* But there will not be ſuch a general and Phyſical Reſurrection at the coming of Chriſt as the Bridegroom, for then the living Saints *only* ſhall enter into the Bride-Chamber, and thoſe wiſe Virgins who never came perſonally into the Kingdom of the Father in Heaven ſhall be admitted into the Kingdom of the Son on Earth, Rev. 3. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne; Even as I alſo overcame and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne*, which Chriſt himſelf expounds, *Rev.* 2. 26 ſaying, *To him will I give power over the Nations*, Even as (*or the ſame power that*) *I received of the Father.*

Secondly, Becauſe at the perſonal coming of Chriſt on Earth, will be the Univerſal *Phyſical* Reſurrection of all that are dead (and the Phyſical change of all their Bodies that are then alive, 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. *Behold I ſhew you a Myſterie we ſhall not all ſleep*, but we *ſhall all be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an Eye at the laſt Trump*

(*for*

(*for the Trumpet ſhall ſound, and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible and we ſhall be changed.*) Which Reſurrection Chriſt in *Joh.* 6. 39, 40, 44. three times together teſtifies ſhall be *at the laſt day*, and Matth. 25. 31, 32. *When the Son of man ſhall come in his glory and all the holy Angels with him, then ſhall he ſit upon the Throne of his Glory*, compared with Rev. 20. 11, 12, 13. *And I ſaw a great white throne and him that ſate on it, from whoſe face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was found no more place for them. And I ſaw the dead ſmall and great ſtand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened which is the Book of life, and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the Book according to their works* ——— *And the Sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to his Works*: together with the eternal Judgement, *Mat.* 25. 33, 34, 46. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7, 8, 9, 10. 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. *Jude* 14, 15. *Rev.* 20. 12.

Thirdly, Becauſe when Chriſt comes virtually and ſpiritually as the Bridegroom, then will begin the times of the Reſtitution of all things. Then God will reſtore our Judges as at the firſt, and our Counſellours

ſellours as at the beginning, *Iſa.* 1. 25, 26, 27. Then Chriſt will reſtore *Iſrael*, and reſtore the Kingdom to *Iſrael*, *Mich.* 4. 7, 8. Even the firſt *Dominion* ſhall come to the Daughter of *Zion*, *the Kingdom ſhall come to the Daughter of Jeruſalem.* Then Chriſt will make all things new, *Rev.* 21. 5. But when Chriſt ſhall come perſonally upon the Earth, (*as the judge of quick and dead*) then will be the diſſolution of the material Heavens and Earth, and the *final* Conſumption and Conflagration of all things, 2 *Pet.* 3. 4, 7, 12. *When the Heavens being on fire ſhall be diſſolved.* Now conſider that this great Deſolation of all things, yea of the *material* Heavens and Earth (*which the Scripture teſtifies will be at Chriſts. ſecond coming,*) cannot be at the beginning of his Kingdom here on Earth for above a thouſand years, after that time *Gog* and *Magog* will be gathered together and compaſs the Camp of the Saints about and the beloved City, *Rev.* 20. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9.

Objection. Doth not this Opinion exempt and exclude Chriſt from Rule and Soveraignty in his *Monarchical* Kingdom on Earth, contrary to Rev. 20. 4. *They lived and reigned with Chriſt a thouſand years?*

Anſwer. No. Conſider *firſt*, Chriſt may be ſaid to be with a perſon or people, and they with

with him *virtually* by his Spirit and power or his powerful *ſpiritual* preſence. *Iſa.* 57. 15. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *Rev.* 2. 1. *Rom.* 6. 4. *Coloſ.* 2. 12, 13. As it is ſaid, *Jer.* 8. 9. *Is not the* LORD *in Zion? Is not her King in Her?* though not perſonally, but ſpiritually.

Secondly, As Chriſt is ſaid to be in his *Myſtical* Kingdom *the Church of God here on Earth*; where his Laws, his Statutes and his Ordinances are diſpenſed in his Name, and by the power of his holy Spirit: ſo will he be in his *Monarchical Kingdom, the throne of his Father* David *here on Earth*, Luke 1. 32, 33. *And the Lord God ſhall give unto him the Throne of his Father* David. *And he ſhall reign over the Houſe of* Jacob *for ever, and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no end*; not perſonally *at the beginning of it*, but virtually by his Laws, *&c.*

Did not the *Ceſars* and Roman Senate govern the World by their Laws and Edicts, and by thoſe Kings and Governours of Provinces whom they Commiſſioned and made Rulers for them? Is not the King of *Spain* ſaid to Rule and Reign in thoſe parts of *America*, and in other parts of the World, (*which he or his Anceſtors Conquered*) by his Laws Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, although he himſelf was never preſent there in his own perſon? And doth not the Pope reign over the

the Kings and Kingdoms of the Earth, who have agreed and given their Kingdom to the Beast, *Rev.* 17. 17, 18. though he was never personally in those Kingdoms, but gives Commissions to his Kings, his Nuntio's, his Cardinals, and his Prelates to rule in his Name and by his Laws and Edicts, Canons and Constitutions to govern the people in those his Kingdoms?

So shall Christ reign over all the Nations and Kingdoms of the World *whom he shall Conquer*, and they shall become his. *Rev.* 11. 5. And HE shall be King of all the Earth, *Zach.* 14. 9. And God shall give him the Throne of his Father *David*, *Luk.* 1. 32. 33. And the Judgement shall be given to the Saints of the most high, and they shall possess the Kingdom, and govern the Nations by Christs Laws, *Dan.* 7. 14, 21, 27. and in his Name, and by his Commission with his holy Spirit and power, and in great glory. Isa. 60. 1, 2, 3, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. *Arise, shine, for thy Light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee—— The Sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee, shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, and they shall call thee the City of the* LORD, *the* Zion *of the holy one of* Israel—— *Whereas thou hast been forsaken and*

and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal Excellency and Joy of many Generations: from the beginning of the thousand years Reign, *Rev.* 20. 4. until the end thereof, which is Christs *Davidical* and *Monarchical* Kingdom. And after that Christ hath put down all Rule, all Authority and all power that are his Enemies, by the hands of his Saints, who shall bind Kings in Chains and Nobles in Fetters of Iron, and execute the Judgement written, *This honour have all the Saints*, Psal. 149. 7, 8, 9. Then will the Lord Jesus Christ himself come in his own person, and all his holy Angels and Saints shall attend him, Matth. 25. 31, 32. *When the Son of Man shall come in his glory and all the Holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Throne of his glory—— And before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepheard divideth his Sheep from the Goats.* Then shall he sit upon the Throne of his Glory, and the Saints shall sit upon Thrones with Christ, Matth. 19. 28. *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the Regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the Throne of his Glory: Ye also shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.* Rev. 3. 21. *To him that overcometh*

will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even also as I overcame and am set down with my Father in his Throne.

This personal coming of Christ had its typical vision and mystical appearance at his Transfiguration, Matth. 17. 1, 2, 9. *And after six dayes Jesus taketh* Peter, James *and* John *his Brethren, and bringeth them up into an high Mountain, and was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the Sun, and his raiment was white as the Light. And as they came down from the Mountain, Jesus charged them saying, Tell the Vision to no man until the Son of Man rise again from the dead.* Those Apostles *Peter, James* and *John* his Brother, were they of whom Christ spake, Matth. 16. 27, 28. *For the Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works* ——— *Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of Death till they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.* And Peter being one of those three, bare his Testimony and Record thereof, 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17, 18. *For we have not followed cunningly devised Fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were Eye-witnesses of his Majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice*

a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased —— *And this Voice which came from Heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy Mount.* And it shall be *visible* indeed, Mat. 24. 27. For as the Lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be, Acts 1. 11. *He shall so come* in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven. And *very glorious*; For Christ shall come in the Glory of his Father, *Mark* 8. 38. In his own glory, and his Fathers, *Luk.* 9. 26. In the glory of the holy Angels also, *Matth.* 25. 31. and likewise in the glory of all his Saints, 2 *Thes.* 1. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Then shall Christ the King of Saints, the King of *Sion*, and the King of Nations be admired of all them that believe, 2 *Thes.* 1. 10. *and praised, saying, Who would not fear Thee O King of Nations*, Jer. 10. 7, 10. *The Blessed and only Potentate, the KING of Kings and LORD of Lords*, 1 Tim. 6. 15. Then also shall the Saints be glorified, *Phil.* 3. 20, 21. *For, our Conversation is in Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ* —— *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned likeunto his glorious Body*, &c. 1 Joh. 3. 2. *Behold now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not appear what*

we ſhall be, but we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is : and Rewarded, Rev. 22. 12. *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me*, Matth. 25. 34. *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, receive the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.*

Then wicked men and wicked Angels ſhall by Chriſt and his Saints be judged according to their Deeds, 1 Cor. 6. 2. *Do ye not know that the Saints ſhall judge the World?* ver. 3. *Know ye not that we ſhall judge Angels?* and 2 Tim. 4. 1. *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt who ſhall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom.* And then ſhall Chriſt deliver up the Kingdom to God the Father, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24, 28. That as Chriſt is now All and in All, *Col.* 3. 11. ſo God the Father then ſhall be All in All, 1 *Cor.* 15. 28. Thus much Negatively.

Affirmatively. That the coming of Chriſt in the 6 and 10 verſes of this *Chapter* is his virtual, ſpiritual, powerful and glorious appearance in his Saints and Sanction (*As the Bridegroom of his Church the New Jeruſalem, the holy City, the general Aſſembly and Church of the firſt born, written in Heaven, who alſo ſhall come down from God out of Heaven prepared as a Bride adorned for her husband*)

hand) and in his Davidical Kingdom on Earth.

For proof of this my opinion, ſearch thoſe places of holy Scripture, *Iſa.* 60. 2, 3, 7, 13. *Pſal.* 110. 1, 3. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. *Rev.* 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Heb.* 12. 23. *Rev.* 21. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee.* ——— *For behold darkneſs ſhall cover the Earth and groſs darkneſs the people: but the* LORD *ſhall ariſe upon thee and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee* ——— *And the Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing* ——— *All the flocks of* Kedar *ſhall be gathered together unto thee, the Rams of* Nebajoth *ſhall miniſter unto thee, they ſhall come up with acceptance on mine Altar, And I will beautifie the houſe of my glory; the Glory of Lebanon ſhall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree and the Box together to beautifie the place of my Sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The* LORD *ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine Enemies thy footſtool. Thy People ſhall be willing in the day of thy power, in the Beauties of holineſs from the Womb of the morning, thou haſt the dew of thy youth* —— *When he ſhall come to be glorified in his Father, and to be admired in all them that believe* (*becauſe our*

testimony among you was believed) in that day——— And I looked and loe a Lamb on the Mount Sion, *and with him an hundred Forty four thousand, having his Fathers Name written in their forehads —— And I heard a voice from Heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps. And they sung as it were a new Song before the Throne, and before the four Beasts, and the Elders, and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which are not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the Throne of God. To the General Assembly and Church of the first Born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect. And I saw a new Heaven, and a new Earth, for the first Heaven, and the first Earth passid away, and there was no more Sea. And I* John *saw the holy City New* Jerusalem *coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband. And I heard a great Voice out of Heaven, saying, Behold*

the

the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away. And he that sate upon the Throne said, Behold I make all things new, And he said unto me write, for these words are true and faithful. Read *Isa.* chapt. 62. particularly *ver.* 5. Christ *not in his own person, but by his substitutes*, doth marry his Church, *so shall thy sons marry thee.*

Go ye out to meet Him. The Virgins went out before and that of their own accord, and very early too; But now they are called out, and that by a loud voice, and are commanded, *Go ye out to meet him.* They who at *first* were so forward, are now at last so backward, that they must be provoked, stirred up, yea rouzed out of their slumbering, sleepy, careless security, and commanded *if not compelled* to go out *again* to meet the Bridegroom.

The Spouse of Christ said within her self, Cant. 3. 2. *I will rise now, I will seek him whom my soul loveth.* And she said to her Beloved, *Come my Beloved, Let us go up early to the Vineyards, there will I give thee my Loves,*

Cant. 7. 11, 12. But for all this her fervency, she cooled in her spiritual Affections towards Christ, was sleepy and indispos'd for spiritual communion with her Beloved, she framed excuses, being lazy and loth to open the door, though she heard him call her, and knew his voice, Cant. 5. 2, 3. *I sleep but my heart waketh, it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my Undefiled, for my head is filled with the dew, and my Locks with the drops of the night. And I have put off my Coat how shall I put it on, I have washed my feet how shall I defile them.*

It hath been hinted in the Exposition of the first verse, in what respects the Virgins went out at first to meet the Bridegroom.

Let us consider what is further intended and here Commanded them in these words, *Go ye out to meet him.*

By going out *again* to meet the Bridegroom, we may *here* understand three things, 1. A Rising and shaking off all security, carelesness and indisposition, to watch and wait for the appearance of Christ, Rom. 13. 11, 12, 13, 14. *And that knowing the time that now is, it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we Believed ——— The night is far spent, the day is at hand, Let us therefore*

cast

caſt off the works of darkneſs, and let us put on the whole armour of God. Let us walk honeſtly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenneſs, in chambering and wantonneſs, not in ſtrife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make no proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the Luſt thereof.

2. A recovering themſelves out of their Backſliding and Apoſtatizing condition, by Prayer, Repentance and Reformation, Jer. 3. 12, 13, 14, 22. *Go and proclaim theſe words towards the North and ſay, Return thou backſliding* Iſrael, *ſaith the Lord, I will not cauſe mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful ſaith the* LORD, *and I will not keep anger for ever.* ——— *Only acknowledge thou thine Iniquity, that thou haſt tranſgreſſed againſt the* LORD *thy God, and haſt ſcattered thy wayes to the ſtrangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice ſaith the* LORD. *Turn O backſliding Children ſaith the* LORD, *for I am married unto you, and I will take you one of a City, and two of a Family, and I will bring you to* Zion. ——— *Return ye Backſliding Children, and I will heal your Backſlidings. Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the* LORD *our God,* Hoſ. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Read the whole Chapter.

3. A preparing to meet the Lord, Amos 4. 12. 2 Chron. 30. 19. *Prepare to meet thy God O Israel.* —*That prepareth his heart to seek God the* LORD *God of his Fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the Purification of his Sanctuary.* Luk. 1. 17. *To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* So did those Virgins, the foolish seemingly, the wise sincerely, *vers.* 7. *Then all those Virgins arose and trimmed their Lamps.*

1. *Meditation.* There will be a Midnight Dispensation of Mystical and Spiritual darkness upon Professors, Isa. 60. 2. *Darkness shall cover the Earth and gross darkness the people,* &c. Distress and perplexity, and great Tribulation upon the Inhabitants of the Earth, Luk. 21. 25, 26, 27. *There shall be upon the Earth distress of Nations with perplexity; Mens hearts failing them for fear,* &c. Matth. 24. 21, 29. And too great security, formality and drowsiness upon some of the wise Virgins, sanctified Believers, before the coming of the Lord Jesus in his Kingdom here on Earth, Matth. 26. 40. *What, could you not watch with me one hour?* 41. *Watch and pray,* &c. Rev. 3. 3. *If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.* Cant. 5. 2, 3. *I have put off my Coat how shall I put it on,* &c.

Matth.

Matth. 24. 37, 38, 39. & Luk. 17. 26, 30. *As it was in the dayes of* Noah *and* Lot, *ſo ſhall it be in the dayes of the Son of Man. So ſhall alſo the coming of the Son of Man be. Even thus it ſhall be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed*, Luk. 17. 30.

2. *Meditation.* That there will be ſuch a *voice* of the LORD, ſuch a voice from the City, and from the Temple, ſuch a loud Cry in the Time of the Midnight Diſpenſation, that will awake and rouze up all the ſlumbering and ſleeping Virgins, Iſa. 66. 6. *A voice of noiſe from the City, a voice from the Temple, a voice of the LORD that rendreth recompence to his Enemies*, Rev. 11. 12. And they (the ſlain or deſpirited Witneſſes, ver. 7.) *heard a great voice from Heaven, ſaying, Come up hither*, Joel 3. 6. *Jehovah alſo ſhall roar out of* Sion, *and utter his voice from* Jeruſalem.

3. *Meditation.* That the next glorious appearance of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will be his virtual and ſpiritual coming in his Saints and Sanction (as the Bridegroom *of his Church*) to marry her by her Sons, *Iſa.* 62. 4, 5. and by them to reign over the Nations with power and great glory a thouſand years here on Earth, *Dan.* 7. 27.

There are but three *ſpecial* kinds and times of Chriſts coming. 1. His coming in the

form

form of a ſervant in the dayes of his fleſh, *Phil.* 2. 7. 2. His coming as a Judge at the laſt day, when he ſhall judge the quick and the dead, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. called his appearing the ſecond time, *Heb.* 9. 28. Both theſe are his perſonal appearances or his coming in his own perſon. But between theſe two appearances or comings of Chriſt in his own perſon, there is witneſſed by the Holy Prophets and Apoſtles, and recorded in the holy Scripture of truth, another *kind* of Chriſts coming at *another* time. And that is his coming as the Bridegroom, and as the only Potentate, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, 1 *Tim.* 6. 14, 15. *Rev.* 19. 16. which is his virtual, ſpiritual, powerful and glorious coming in his Saints and Sanction, and by them to marry his *Jeruſalem*, *Iſa.* 62. 4, 5. ſo ſhall thy ſons marry thee, and with them to reign over the Nations and Kingdoms of the World, a thouſand years on Earth, Rev. 11. 15, 16, 17. *And the ſeventh Angel ſounded, and there were great voices in Heaven, ſaying, The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty Elders which ſate before God on their ſeats, fell upon their faces and worſhipped God, ſaying, We give thee thanks O Lord God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and*

art

rt to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy reat power and hast reigned. Rev. 19. 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16. *And I heard as it were the oice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many Thunderings, saying, Alleluja, for the Lord God mnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, ive honour to him, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made her self ady,* Rev. 20. 4, 5, 7, 9. *And I saw Thrones, nd they that sate upon them, and Judgement as given unto them. And I saw the souls f them that were beheaded for the Witness f Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which ad not worshipped the Beast, neither his Image, ither had received his mark upon their foreeads, or in their hands, and they lived and eigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest f the dead lived not again until the thousand ars were finished. This is the first Resurrecti-* —— *And when the thousand years are exired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison —— nd they went upon the Breadth of the Earth, nd compassed the Camp of the Saints about, nd the Beloved City, and Fire came down from od out of Heaven and devoured them.*

4. *Meditation.* It is the Duty of all Virin-professors, *especially* sanctified Believers, *ho are wise Virgins*, to go out and meet the idegroom, when he comes by his spiritual power

power and glory in his Saints and Sanctions to set up his Kingdom and to reign on Earth.

First, The Lord Jesus Christ who is King of Saints, *Rev.* 15. 3. King of *Zion*, *Psal.* 149. 1, 2. and the King of Nations, *Jer.* 10. 7. shall be the only Potentate, 1 *Tim.* 6. 14, 15. and King of all the Earth, *Zach.* 14. 9. And all the Kingdoms of the World shall be his, *Rev.* 11. 15. and his Saints, *Dan.* 7. 14, 22, 27. And they shall reign with Christ on Earth a thousand years, *Rev.* 5. 10. and *Rev.* 20. 4.

Secondly, The God of Heaven will set up this Kingdom of Christ and his Saints in the dayes of those Kings of the fourth Monarchy that oppose him and his Saints, *Dan.* 2. 24. And give it unto Christ as he is the Son of *David*, Luk. 1. 32, 33. *He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the Throne of his Father* David, *and he shall reign over the house of* Jacob *for ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no End.* —— *And unto the Saints of the most high.* Dan. 7. 27. *And the Kingdom and Dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven shall be given to the people of the Saints of the most high, whose Kingdom is an Everlasting Kingdom, and all Dominions shall serve and obey him*, who

take it and poſſeſs it a thouſand years.

Thirdly, When Chriſt comes to ſet up his Kingdom and to reign on Earth Virtually and Spiritually in his Saints and Sanction, with power and great glory; It's the Duty of all Virgin-profeſſors, eſpecially ſanctified Believers, *who are wiſe Virgins* to go out to meet the Bridegroom, *ver.* 6.

To meet the Bridegroom implies, 1. To be walking in the ſame way of Truth, whereln Chriſt comes, *viz.* To own that truth, and to witneſs unto that truth of the Kingdom, and power, and Glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, againſt the Kingdom, power, and Glory of Antichriſt, which is the finiſhing Teſtimony of all the *faithful* Witneſſes of Chriſt, Rev. 11. 7. *And when they ſhall have finiſhed their Teſtimony, the Beaſt that aſcendeth out of the Bottomleſs pit ſhall make war againſt them and overcome them and kill them.* Which Teſtimony is that Goſpel of the Kingdom of Chriſt that muſt be preached in all the World for a Witneſs unto all Nations, *Matth.* 24. 14.

2. To meet the Bridegroom implyes a progreſs and going on in that way of truth without wearineſs, fainting, ſitting down and ſlumbering, Iſa. 40. 28, 29, 30, 31. *Haſt thou not known, haſt thou not heard that the Everlaſting God is LORD, the Creator of the*

the Ends of the Earth fainteth not, neither is weary. There is no ſearching of his underſtanding —— *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaſeth ſtrength. Even the youth ſhall faint and be weary, and the young men ſhall utterly fail: but they that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength, and they ſhall walk and not faint.*

3. To meet the Bridegroom implyes a diligent and continual watching and waiting for the virtual, ſpiritual, powerful and glorious appearance of Chriſt the Bridegroom, Iſa. 26. 8, 9. *Yea in the way of thy Judgements have we waited, O LORD have we waited for thee: The Deſire of our ſoul is to thy name, and to the Remembrance of thee, in the night, yea with my Spirit within me will I ſeek thee Early; For when thy Judgements are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteouſneſs.* Habak. 2. 3, 4. *For the Viſion is for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak, and not lye: though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his ſoul which is lifted up, is not upright in him; but the juſt ſhall live by his faith.* Matth. 25. 13. *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day, nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.*

Verſ.

Verſ. 7. *Then all thoſe Virgins aroſe and trimmed their Lamps*, or cleanſed their Lamps.

The Virgins being awakened by the Cry at midnight, did all ariſe, *that is to ſay*, All thoſe Virgin-profeſſors began to ſhake off their carnal ſecurity, and riſe from their beds of ſpiritual eaſe of ſloth, and lazineſs, and lukewarmneſs, Iſa. 32. 9. *Riſe up ye Women that are at eaſe*, Cant. 3. 2. And went out again to meet the Bridegroom, as they were commanded, *ver.* 6. being glad to hear that Chriſt was now coming, in that midnight diſpenſation. They do as *David* did, Pſal. 119. 62. *At midnight will I ariſe and give thanks unto thee.* As *Jonathan* aroſe, and went to meet *David*, 1 *Sam.* 23. 16. So thoſe Virgin-profeſſors aroſe and went out again to meet the Bridegroom Chriſt Jeſus the Son of *David.* Now the Virgins are awakened, and they call upon one another like the Watchmen of Mount *Ephraim*, ſaying, Jer. 31. 6. *Ariſe ye, and let us go up to* Zion, *unto Jehovah our God.* The coming of Chriſt *the Bridegroom* will be a morning of ſuch glorious light that ſhineth from

one end of the Heavens unto the other, that will ſhine upon all the Virgin-profeſſors, and cauſe the Wiſe Virgins to ariſe and ſhine as was Propheſied, Iſa. 60. 1, 2. *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the* LORD *is riſen upon thee.* ——— *For behold the darkneſs ſhall cover the Earth, and groſs darkneſs the People, but the* LORD *ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee.* And in order to their ſhining profeſſion, the Virgins being riſen are ſaid to trim their Lamps.

And trimmed their Lamps. It ſeems whileſt the Virgins ſlumbred and ſlept, their Lamps decayed; *that is to ſay,* The Oile in their Lamps waſted, and was ſpent, and the wick and ſmoaking flax was burnt, and the light that had ſhined for ſome time, began to grow dim, and was going out, and ſome of their Lamps were gone out being foul and unſavoury, *ver.* 8.

By trimming their Lamps is meant all the means and endeavours thoſe Virgin-profeſſors uſed to cleanſe and purge their Lamps, to ſupply them with Oyle, and wick or flax, and ſo to repair their light, and prepare themſelves to meet the Bridegroom, *that is to ſay,* Now that the Virgins are awakened and are riſen up, they, *eſpecially* the wiſe Virgins

Virgins begin again to ſpeak of the glory of Chriſts Kingdom, and to talk of his power, *Pſal.* 145. 10, 11, 12. and to prepare themſelves for the coming and Kingdom of Chriſt. The wiſe Virgins having Oyle in their Veſſels, get their Lamps ſupplyed. And like the Bride, the Lambs Wife, Rev. 19. 7, 8. they make themſelves ready, ver. 10. And *they that were ready went in with him,* (with Chriſt the Bridegroom) *into the Marriage.* But the fooliſh Virgins having no Oyle in their Veſſels, *that is,* They being without Chriſt, and having not the ſpiritual Unction of the Grace of God in their hearts, their Lamps went out, and they were ſhut out of the Marriage Chamber, *ver.* 10, 11, 12. Whileſt they went to buy Oyle, even whileſt they were ſeeking after Chriſt, Prov. 1. 22, 23, 28. *How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity, and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorn, and fools hate knowledge?* ——— *Turn you at my reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my Words unto you. Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.* And Luke 13. 24, 25, 26, 27. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, for many I ſay unto you ſhall ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.*

When once the Master of the house is risen up and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door, saying Lord, Lord open unto us, and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not, whence you are; Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets —— *But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are. Depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity.*

1. *Meditation.* The publick Testimony of the nearness of Christs coming as the Bridegroom with *spiritual* power and great glory in his Saints and Sanction, will awaken and raise some Virgin-professors out of their Security, Backsliding and Apostasie.

That there will be a Cry at midnight, *viz.* A loud voice from the Lord, a voice from the City, a voice from the Temple, *to wit,* a publick Ministerial testimony even in the midst of the Midnight Dispensation, and saying, Behold the Bridegroom cometh, hath been shewed in the Exposition of the sixth verse, and the words of this seventh verse testifie that loud voice or Cry did awake and cause the Virgins to Rise, *Then all those virgins arose,* to wit, out of the slumber and sleep of their sinful silence, worldly

worldly eaſe, carnal ſecurity, careleſs formality, backſliding and Apoſtaſie, and ſome of them with their Loins girt, and their Lamps burning, did ariſe and ſhine, and went out again to meet the Bridegroom.

2. *Meditation.* That ſome of the Virgin-profeſſors ſhall be recovered out of their Security, Backſliding and Apoſtaſie, and ſhall riſe and ſhine at the coming of Jeſus Chriſt as the Bridegroom of his Church.

God hath promiſed to heal the Backſlidings of his People upon their repentance and returning to the Lord, Jer. 3. 22. *Return ye back-ſliding Children, and I will heal your back-ſlidings: Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the* LORD *our God*, Hoſea 14. 1, 4. And he will cauſe the light of the knowledge of the glory of God to ſhine in their hearts, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. And make them ſhine in a holy Goſpel-Converſation, *Iſa.* 60. 1, 2, 3. to the praiſe and glory of God, *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the* LORD *is riſen upon thee,* ——— *For behold the darkneſs ſhall cover the Earth, and groſs darkneſs the people: but the* LORD *ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his Glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee. And*

Gentiles shall come to thy light, and Kings to the Brightness of thy Rising.

3. *Meditation.* It's the Duty of Virgin-professors and Church-members to prepare themselves for the coming of Christ as the Bridegroom, Matth. 24. 44. *Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh,* Luk. 12. 35, 36, 40. *Let your Loins be girded about, and your lights burning.* —— *And ye your selves like unto men that wait for the Lord, when he will return from the Wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*

To be so prepared and ready, The wise Virgins must put on their beautiful Garments, *Isa.* 52. 1. and rejoyce as *Zion* did, Isa. 61. 10. *I will greatly rejoice in the* LORD, *my Soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath cloathed me with the Garments of Salvation, he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with her Jewels.* And those that have spotted their Garments of profession by any sinful Conversation or complyance, ought to wash their Robes, and make them

them white in the blood of the Lamb, *Rev.* 7. 14. That ſo they all being cloathed with fine Linnen, white and clean (*which is the Righteouſneſs of the Saints*, Rev. 19. 8.) as a Bride adorned for her husband, *Rev.* 21. 2. may walk with Chriſt in white. And (being thus adorned and made ready to meet the Bridegroom) may be counted worthy to enter with him into the Marriage Chamber. Of this Preparation you will read more in *ver.* 10.

Verſ. 8. *And the fooliſh ſaid unto the wiſe, Give us of your Oyle, for our Lamps are gone out.*

In theſe words conſider 1. The Requeſt that the fooliſh Virgins made unto the wiſe, *Give us of your Oyle.* 2. The Reaſon of their Requeſt, *For our Lamps are gone out.*

The fooliſh Virgin-profeſſors were now *at laſt* made ſenſible that they wanted Oyle, and that it was their great folly that they did take no Oyle with them (*as the wiſe Virgins did in their Veſſels*) when they took their Lamps, and went out to meet the Bridegroom.

1. *Meditation.* It argues and demonſtrates very great folly in thoſe Virgin-profeſſors,

and Church-members, who ſeem to be Religious, having a form of Godlineſs, and are looking for and bearing Teſtimony unto the ſpiritual Kingdom and glorious appearance and coming of Chriſt the Churches Bridegroom, to be without Chriſt and to want the ſpirit of Chriſt, and the ſaving and ſanctifying Grace of Jeſus Chriſt in their hearts.

Doubtleſs, Now at laſt the fooliſh Virgins were very ſenſible of their folly in reſting ſatisfied and contented with a profeſſion of Chriſt, without a poſſeſſion of Chriſt; with having their Lamps, and the form of Godlineſs, without the Oyle of Grace, and the power of Godlineſs; And with being in a Goſpel Church State, and therein partaking of the holy Ordinances of God and enjoying fellowſhip with the Wiſe Virgin-Saints, and yet not being partakers of the Divine Nature, nor having communion and fellowſhip with God the Father, Son and holy Spirit in the wayes and Ordinances of God.

Now thoſe fooliſh Virgin-profeſſors wiſh they had ſome of the wiſe Virgins Oyle; O, *ſay they*, that we had Chriſt, the Spirit of Chriſt, and the Grace of Chriſt in our hearts. Now they ask and beg, they ſeek unto and intreat the wiſe Virgin-Saints, *ſaying*, *Give*

us of your Oyle, Communicate of your saving and sanctifying Graces to our souls.

2. *Meditation.* The time will come when foolish Professors and formal Church members will see and sadly experience their being without Christ, and their want of the Spirit and Grace of God.

Many Professors now can live without Christ, and without God, and without Grace in the World, yea in the Churches of Saints, and in the Ordinances of the Gospel, sometimes making a shining profession of Christ, and witnessing of, and bearing their testimony to the Kingdom and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and at other times slumbering and sleeping in a carnal security, luke-warmness, formality and backsliding Apostasie: who when they are awakened by some midnight dispensation of God, will see and be convinced, and made sensible of their want and need of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ, and the Grace of Christ.

The time will come when they shall see and know by a thorow conviction, and woful experience that none but Christ, nothing but Grace will supply their wants, nor satisfie their souls. *Give us of your Oyle:* Oh! that we had possession of Christ as you have; Oh! that the saving sanctifying Grace of God,

God, and Spirit of God were in our hearts, as they are in yours; We now see our want of the power of Godliness, Truth of Grace, and Union and Communion with Christ, which you have and enjoy.

And though Men and Women, yea some Professors and Church-members can live without Christ, buy and sell without Christ, build and plant without Christ, marry and give in marriage without Christ (for they will be very busie about such things, when the Son of Man cometh, *Luke* 17. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.) and some Professors can have and hold Communion with the Saints in the Churches and holy Ordinances of God, without Christ and Grace: Yet when Christ comes, yea when death comes, and they are awakened by that midnight dispensation, then they see themselves lost and undone to Eternity, then they know not what to do, nor how to dye without Christ and without Grace. Then they call, and cry, send for, and seek unto the Ministers and Saints of God, and say pray for us, speak to us, pity us, tell us what we shall do. O Men and Brethren *what shall we do* (as they did, *Acts* 2. 37. And as the Jayler did, Acts 16. 30. *Sirs what shall I do to be saved?* and as the foolish Virgins did here to the wise Virgins, *Give us of your Oyle.*)

For our Lamps are gone out; or are going out, as in the Margent. This is the Reason of their Request; as if they had said, O ye wise Virgin-Saints, Sanctified Believers, who have Union with Christ, who have obtained the precious faith of Gods Elect, and have received the Grace of God in truth, and all the fruits of the Spirit; Give us of your Oyle, communicate some of your saving sanctifying Grace unto us. For our Lamps of professed Gospel-light, our shining Temple-Light, all our spiritual Gifts and common Grace, all our former Gospel Enjoyments, *even* all our hopes and comforts are now decayed, withered, perished, and are ready to dye, and be utterly extinguished, and we our selves are in the dark, and must sit down and perish in eternal darkness, unless you can and will supply us with some of your spiritual Oyle; *For our Lamps are gone out.*

3. *Meditation.* That all the Gospel-light, that shines in the spiritual gifts, and religious actions of foolish and formal professors, will at last be extinguished, and go out, and they will fall away.

1. There are some formal Professors that have received spiritual Gifts from God, 1 Cor. 12. 4. to the 12 verse, *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, and there*

there are differences of Administrations, but the same Lord———— And there are diversities of Operations, but it is the same God that worketh all in all—— But the manifestation of the Spirit, is given to every Man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the Word of Wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, by the same spirit———— To another faith by the same spirit, to another the gift of healing by the same spirit, to another the working of Miracles, to another Prophesie, to another discerning of Spirits, to another divers kinds of Tongues, to another the Interpretation of tongues. One member of the Church may have a word of knowledge, another may have a word of Wisdom, another may have a gift of Prophesie, another may have faith (*not sanctifying faith*) and all these and several other Gifts given them by the holy Spirit of God, and yet not have Christ, nor the Graces of faith and Love in Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3. *Though I speak with the tongues of Men and of Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling Cymbal. And though I have the gifts of prophesie, and understand all Mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have not Charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I*

give

give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing. Gal. 5. 6. *For in Jesus Christ, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by Love.* The Apostle in these words, *Neither Circumcision availeth any thing*, sheweth and testifieth that no Priviledges, Ordinances, Gifts or Administrations that the Jews had under the Law; *Nor Uncircumcision*, that is to say, no Priviledges, Ordinances, Gifts or Administrations, which the Gentiles have under the Gospel, will profit or avail them any thing in order unto the obtaining of Eternal Life, and Everlasting Salvation, without faith in Christ Jesus, that works by Love, or as *Paul* saith, Gal. 6. 15. *For in Christ Jesus, neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new Creature*; that is, unless the professing Jew or Gentile be *a new Creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. that is, Gods Workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, *Ephes.* 2. 10. that we should walk in them.

2. And some foolish and formal Virgin-professors may shine *for a season* in the Acts and Exercise of those spiritual gifts that they have received from God for the Churches Edification, 1 Cor. 14. 1, & 3. *Follow after Charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may Prophesie.* ——— *But he that Pro-*

Prophesieth speaketh unto men to Edification, and Exhortation and Comfort. And they may also shine in some kind and degree of Gospel-like conversation, and Saint-like life, in respect of some external actions and outward performance of holy duties. And they may likewise shine like Lamps and Temple-lights in bearing their Witness and Testimony for Christ, his Head-ship, Ministry, Churches, Worship, Kingdom and Government. And lastly, they may shine like Lamps and burning Lights in enduring the Afflictions of the Gospel, in suffering the spoyling of their goods, imprisonment, Banishment, yea and death it self, 2 *Cor.* 13. 1, 2, 3.

3. And yet after all this their Lamps will go out, and those fooliſh and formal Professors will fall away, Luk. 8. 13. *They on the Rock are they which when they hear, receive the Word with Joy, and these have no Root, which for a time believe, and in time of temptation fall away.* Those hard hearted hearers *believed for a time*, They made a profession of the faith of the Gospel, and they made a confession too, and that before many Witnesses; *But in time of temptation fell away.* When that hour of temptation comes upon them which Christ hath foretold shall come upon all the world, to try them that

dwell

dwell upon the Earth, *Rev.* 3. 10. then they will fall away; and the Reason is, because *they have no Root*, that is, they have not Christ, they are not rooted in him, Col. 2. 6, 7. *As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, stablished in the faith: as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.* Faith in Christ never falls away, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4, 5. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you, who are kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto Salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.* It's a faith without Christ that foolish Professors depart from, 1 Tim. 4. 1. *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils.*

Vers.

Verſ. 9: *But the Wiſe anſwered, ſaying, Not ſo, leſt there be not enough for us and you, but go ye rather to them that ſell, and buy for your ſelves.*

This Verſe contains the Anſwer that the Wiſe Virgins gave to the requeſt of the Fooliſh Virgins. Wherein,

1. They gave them a denyal, and the reaſon thereof; *But the Wiſe anſwered, ſaying, Not ſo*; We may not, we cannot grant what you deſire of us, *leſt there be not enough for us and you.* As if the Wiſe Virgins had ſaid, It's true indeed, we have Oyle in our Veſſels, and ſupply for our Lamps; But we can ſpare none, our Veſſels have no more Oyle in them than we do and ſhall need for our ſelves, *Not ſo.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath given us his ſaving and ſanctifying Grace, but we may not, we cannot give it to you, no not the leaſt meaſure of it; not a dram nor a drop can we give, nor can we ſpare any of it, we ſtand in need to get more grace for our ſelves, leſt we ſhould not have enough in thoſe hours and times of Tryals, that we may meet with yet, ere we meet with the Bridegroom; and leſt we have not enough for thoſe ſervices of Chriſt, and ſufferings

sufferings for Christ that our Lord may call us to either before his coming, or when he comes, or after he is come as the Bridegroom.

2. They gave the foolish Virgins Directions what to do in their condition, *But go ye rather to them that sell and buy for your selves*, Wherein we are to consider, 1. Who they are that sell this spiritual Oyle? 2. What it is to buy it?

The spiritual Oyle is the Unction of the holy one, 1 *Joh.* 2. 20, 27. That wherewith Christ was anointed above his fellows, *Psal.* 45. 7. *viz.* the saving, sanctifying Grace of God, the gifts and fruits of the holy Spirit, of which read the Exposition of *vers.* 4.

They that sell this Mystical and Spiritual Oyle, are Christ, and his Ministers, and Servants. The Lord Jesus Christ is the owner of this Oyle, and he himself doth sometimes sell it, or offer it to sale, as he did to the Church of *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 18. *I counsel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white Raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see.* But ordinarily and commonly Christ authorizeth and commandeth his faithful Servants (the Ministers of the Gospel) whom he appointeth, commissioneth and sends to offer this

spiritual Oyle to sale, and to sell it unto whomsoever will buy it, Isa. 51. 1. *Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewen, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.* Joh. 7. 37. *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, and cryed, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* Rev. 22. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride say Come: And let him that heareth, say Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* For as it was a great sin in *Simon Magus* to offer money, and to think that the gifts of the Holy Ghost might be bought for material money, so it is a very great sin in any Minister to sell this Mystical Oyle for material Silver or Gold, or any price or earthly commodity. And it is a very great mistake in foolish Professors, to think they may buy, *that is*, bargain with God for Christ and Grace upon the terms of the old Covenant of works, and their own Righteousness, which is as menstruous raggs.

To buy this spiritual Oyle, Implyes three things: 1. A sense of want and need of it, which the foolish Virgins now had. 2. Attending upon the Ministry of the Word and Administrations of the Gospel to obtain it,

or to get some of this Oyle, having their heart and hand open and willing to receive it, Acts 16. 14. *And a certain Woman named* Lydia *a seller of Purple of the City of* Thyatira, *which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.* 3. A willingness to have it upon Christs own terms of free Grace, without money and without price, Isa. 55. 1, 2, 3. & Rev. 22. 17. *Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. And he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness.* —— *Encline your Ear and hear, and come unto me, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of* David. —— *And he said unto me, it is done, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.* —— *And the Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

1. *Meditation.* O That Virgin Saints who have the greatest and fullest measure of Grace and Holiness, cannot give or impart any of it unto others.

And the Foolish said unto the Wise, give us of your Oyle; that is, Impart some of your Grace unto us: but the Wise answered and said, *Not so*, we cannot give you Grace, nor can we impart any of our Grace to you. Oh! saith a dying Father, Mother, or some other Relation, I am without Christ, I have no Grace, I am ready to dye and be damned, and I shall perish to all Eternity. O Dear Wife, Child, Husband, or other Godly Relation, that my soul were in your souls condition. Oh! speak comfort and peace to me: Oh! that I had Christ, Grace, Pardon or any hope of Eternal Life. But then those Godly Relations must say, *It is not in me*, I cannot impart any Grace to you; Christ must give you of his Spirit, and God must give you of his Grace, I cannot.

Godly Parents and Relations may and ought to pray that God will give pardoning Grace, sanctifying Grace, saving Grace to their Children, or to any other Relations but they cannot give any, nor can they impart any Grace to them.

Abraham could not give Grace to *Ishmael*, nor could *Isaac* impart Grace to *Esau*, nor *Jacob* to *Reuben*; no, nor *David* to *Absolom*, nor *Job* to his Wife: Neither could *Paul* impart Grace to his Countrey-men, for whom his hearts desire and Prayer was, that they might be saved; and although he was willing to be accursed for them, as the holy Scriptures of Truth testifie.

2. *Meditation.* Every Saint and sanctified Believer will (*ere he get to Heaven*) stand in need of all the Grace he hath.

Sanctified Believers, called Saints, may meet with such fiery tryals, such hellish Temptations, such powerful stirrings of corruptions, and so great variety of Afflictions, Tribulations, Persecutions and Sufferings; yea such hours and powers of darkness, and so deep Desertions that will call for and require the Virgins lively Acts and Exercise of all the Grace of God they have; yea, and they may be necessitated to go to Christ for more Grace as the Apostle did, 2 Cor. 12. 7, 8, 9. *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the Revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the Messenger of Satan to*

buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me: And he said unto me, My Grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my Infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Believers will have need of all the Grace they have, when they come to dye, and be dissolved.

3. *Meditation.* It's the duty of every person, that sees their need and want of Christ, his holy Spirit, and sanctifying Grace to attend upon the Ministry of the Gospel and Administrations of the holy Ordinances of God, and to accept and receive Christ and Grace offered freely without money or price.

Many sinners are so blinded 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4. that they see no form nor comeliness in Christ; and when they do see some beauty and excellency in him, yet they are apt to refuse and reject him, until they be throughly convinced of their want and need of him, his Spirit and Grace, and *that there is not salvation in any other*, Acts 4. 12. And then they begin to desire and say, Oh! that I had Christ, Oh! that I had Grace, Oh! that I could believe. Now it is their

Duty

Duty to attend diligently and conſcionably upon the Miniſtry of the Goſpel and means of Grace; for faith comes by Hearing the Word Preached, Rom. 10. 17. Acts 14. 1. Iſa. 55. 3. *Incline your Eare, come unto me, hear and your ſouls ſhall live. And I will make an everlaſting Covenant with you*, &c.

And as it is their Duty to hear, ſo it is their Duty to believe, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. and by faith to accept and receive Jeſus Chriſt offered to them upon Goſpel terms of free Grace, without money and without price, Joh. 1. 11, 12. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name* Rev. 22. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride ſay come, and let him that heareth ſay come, and whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely*: and *Iſa.* 55. 1, 2, 3.

Verſ. 10. *And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the Marriage, and the door was ſhut.*

The fooliſh Virgins followed the Counſel of the wiſe and went to buy Oyle for themſelves; and ſo do many formal and fooliſh Profeſſors (*when they are convinced of their ſins, and of their neceſſity of a Saviour*) then they ſeek after Chriſt and cry for grace, and call upon God for pardoning mercy and ſalvation, but it's too late it may be, Prov. 1. 24, 28. *Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand and no man regarded——Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early but they ſhall not find me. And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came.*

And they that were ready went in with him to the Marriage, and the door was ſhut. They that were duly prepared for the Bridegrooms coming had an entrance admitted to them into his Kingdom, and all others were excluded.

They that were ready had put off the filthy raggs of their own Righteouſneſs, and had put

ut on the Robes of Christs Righteousnes, *Rom.* 13. 14. God had taken away their filthy garments and had cloathed them with change of raiment, *Zach.* 3. 3, 4. Thus *Zion* the holy City the New *Jerusalem* is called upon and commanded by the LORD her Maker, her Husband and her Redeemer to loose her self from the Bands of her Neck, her *Captivity*, to arise and put on her beautiful garments, *Isa.* 52. 1, 2, 3. And so she shall do with great Joy and rejoycing. And therefore she is *propheticaly* laid to do so, Isa. 61. 10. *I will greatly rejoice in the* LORD, *my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath cloathed me with the Garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the Robes of Righteousnes; as a Bridegroom adorneth himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride decketh her self with her Jewels.*

And to be prepared for the Bridegrooms coming is to be arrayed in fine Linnen, white and clean, which is the Righteousnes of the Saints, *Rev.* 19. 7, 8. And so the holy City, the New *Jerusalem* was prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband in *John*'s Vision, *Rev.* 21. 2. Of this glorious Marriage and *mysterie of Christ and his Church*, *David* Prophesied, *Psal.* 45. Wherein we have this great and glorious solemnity of the Bridegrooms coming, and of the Marriage of the Lamb

Mystically

Myſtically and Metaphorically ſung and penned down by that ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael* in that (*Epithalamium*) Love-ſong, or Marriage-ſong, Pſal. 45. 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14. *My heart is inditing a good matter, I ſpeak of the things which I have made touching the King. My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.* ——*Thou art fairer than the Children of Men; Grace is poured into thy Lips therefore God hath bleſſed thee for ever. Thy Throne O God is for ever and ever, and the Scepter of thy Kingdom is a right Scepter. All thy Garments ſmell of Myrrhe, and Aloes, and Caſſia, out of the Ivory places whereby they have made thee glad. Kings Daughters were among thy honourable Women. Upon thy right hand did ſtand the Queen in Gold of Ophir. The Kings Daughter is all glorious within, her Cloathing is of wrought Gold.* ——*She ſhall be brought unto the King in Raiment of Needle-work; the Virgins her Companions that follow her, ſhall be brought unto thee; with gladneſs and rejoycing they ſhall enter into the Kings Palace.* And ſo the Prophet *Ezekiel* (deſcribing the Churches condition, from her Cradle to her Crown, *Ezek.* 16. 13——14.) ſpeaks of her inward and ſpiritual beauty and glory under divers Metaphors and figurative Expreſſions, *ver.* 8. to the end of the 14. *Now when I paſſed by thee, and looked upon thee; Behold thy time*

time was the time of Love. And I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy Nakedness; yea, I sware unto thee, and entred into a Covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water, yea I throughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with Oyle, I cloathed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with Badgers skin, and I girded thee about with fine Linnen, and I covered thee with silk, and decked thee also with Ornaments, and I put Bracelets upon thine hands, and a Chain on thy neck, and I put a Jewel on thy forehead, and Ear-rings in thine Ears, and a beautiful Crown upon thine Head. Thus wast thou decked with Gold and Silver, and thy Raiment was of fine Linnen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flower and honey, and Oyle, and thou wast exceeding beautiful. And thou didst prosper into a Kingdom. ——— And thy renown went forth among the Heathen for thy Beauty was perfect through my Comeliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD. This Prophesie in the Mysterie of it, will be fulfilled when the Bridegroom cometh, for then Christ will put on a beautiful Crown upon her head, and she will be exceeding beautiful, and she shall then prosper into a Kingdom, Isa. 28. 5. *In that day shall the LORD be for a Crown*

of

of Glory, and for a Diadem of Beauty, unto the residue of his people. Isa. 62. 3. *Thou shalt also be a Crown of glory in the hand of the* LORD, *and a Royal Diadem in the hand of thy God.* When will this day of *Zions* glory be? *then it will be,* when the Bridegroom cometh, and marries his Bride, Isa. 62. 5. *For as a young man marrieth a Virgin, so shall sons marry thee, and as the Bridegroom rejoyceth over the Bride, so shall thy God rejoyce over thee.* And thus the wise Virgin-saints were prepared and ready, *and went in with him to the marriage.*

And the door was shut. There is the Door of Grace, and that is all opportunities and seasons that the Ministers of Christ have and improve to preach, and the people have and improve to hear the Gospel of the Grace of God; also to administer and partake of the holy Ordinances of God in any place, and at any time, called an open Door, Rev. 3. 8. *A great Door and Effectual is opened,* &c. 1 Cor. 16. 9. and 2 Cor. 2. 12. *And a Door was opened to me of or by the Lord.* That was a door of Grace. And when God removes the Candlestick, takes away the Gospel, suffering the Adversaries to sleight and persecute his faithful Ministers and Churches of Saints, when their Ministers by Imprisonment or Banishment are removed into Corners,

ners, and their Eyes cannot see their Teachers, when the people run to and fro, to seek the Word of the Lord, and cannot find it, then the Door of Grace is shut.

There is also the Door of the Kingdom of Christ, Luk. 13. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. *When once the Master of the house is risen up and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door, saying,* LORD, LORD, *open unto us, and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not, whence you are; Then shall ye begin to say, we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets, but he shall say, I tell you I know you not, whence you are; depart from me all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see* Abraham, *and* Isaac, *and* Jacob, *and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you your selves thrust out. And they shall come from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God.* This is the door that was shut here in my text, *to wit*, the door of Christs marriage Chamber, *that is to say*, an entrance and admittance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 1. 10, 11. *Wherefore the rather Brethren give diligence to make your Caling and Election sure, for if ye do these things, ye shall*

never

never fail, for so an entrance shall be minister'd unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

1. *Meditation.* That all persons, especially Virgin-professors ought to prepare, and to be ready, when *Christ the Churches Bridegroom cometh.*

To this end, 1. Sinners, you must get Jesus Christ, if you will not receive and entertain Christ into your hearts by faith, a true penitent and lively faith, he will not receive and admit you into the Marriage Chamber of his Kingdom, when he comes *as the Bridegroom.* If sinners will not let Christ live in them, and reign in them, in the Kingdom of his grace now, *Rom.* 15. 20, 21. they shall not live and reign with him in his Kingdom, *Rev.* 20. 4. Christ will shut the door of his Kingdom against them that shut the door of their hearts against him.

Therefore Sinners, whilest Jesus Christ stands at the door, open the door of your hearts to Christ, and let him come and set up the Kingdom of his Grace in your hearts according to this gracious promise, Rev. 3. 20, 21, 22. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him and sup with him,*

him, and he with me. ——*To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the Churches.*

2. Saints, you ought to prepare and be ready to meet Christ *the Churches Bridegroom*, when he cometh, and therefore consider what you have to do ere you and Jesus Christ meet in his Marriage Kingdom. O gracious and precious Saints, have you not something to do ere you dye? Can you heartily desire and earnestly pray to be dissolved and be with Christ before you have overcome the world, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5. go the victory over sin, 1 *Cor.* 15. 56, 57. and resisted, vanquished, and made a conquest over the Devil, 1 *Joh.* 2. 13, 14. and in all these to be more than Conquerours through Christ Jesus our Lord? *Rom.* 8. 37. Can you expect to inherit all things, *Rev.* 21. 7. until you have overcome all things? our Lord Jesus Christ overcame before he sate down with the Father in his Throne. And will Jesus Christ grant you to sit down with him in his Throne, untill you have also overcome? *Rev.* 3. 21, 22.

Again consider Saints, are you *prepared* as a Bride adorned for her Husband? *Rev.* 21. 2, 3. Are you cloathed in fine Linnen, white

and

and clean, *Rev.* 19. 8. and ſo made *Ready* for the Marriage of the Lamb? *Rev.* 19. 7. Or do not ſome of you ſtand in need to waſh your *Robes* and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, *Rev.* 7. 14, 15. before you can put on your *beautiful* garments, *Iſa.* 52. 1, 2. and adorn your ſelves with Ornaments as a Bride, *Iſa.* 61. 10. or as the Bride-maidens, the Virgins her Companions? *Pſal.* 45. 9 13, 14.

The LORD firſt waſhed his people with water, yea, he throughly waſhed away their blood from them, and anointed them with Oyle, and then he cloathed them with broidered work, girded them with Linnen and covered them with ſilk. He decked them alſo with Ornaments, Bracelets, Jewels, chains of Gold and Pearl about their neck, and at laſt he put a beautiful Crown upon the Churches head, and they proſpered into a Kingdom, *Ezek.* 16. 9 —— 14. So the Apoſtle teſtifieth, That Jeſus Chriſt gave himſelf for his Church *that he might ſanctifie it, and cleanſe it with the waſhing of water by the word, that he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.* O beloved and bleſſed Virgin Saints, how much cleaning, purging, ſanctifying work is there yet to be done in your

ſouls

ſouls by the ſpirit, and word of God in the lively and powerful applications of the precious blood of Jeſus Chriſt, *Heb.* 9. 14. *and Heb.* 13. 12. *and* 1 *Joh.* 7. 9.

Once more conſider ſaints, O ye wiſe Virgins, are your Veſſels full of Oyle? Are your hearts full of Grace, have you perfected holineſs in the fear of God? 2 *Cor.* 7. And are you come in the Unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man? *Eph.* 4. 13. If not, you are not yet ſo prepared, nor are you yet ſo ready as you ſhould deſire and endeavour to be, and may be through the Communication of the exceeding riches of the grace of God, *Eph.* 2. 7. and the unſearchable riches of Jeſus Chriſt, you may attain to be ere the Bridegroom come.

2. *Meditation.* Whileſt ſome fooliſh and negligent Virgin-profeſſors are ſeeking too late to get, and endeavouring too late to buy the ſpiritual Oyle of Grace to ſupply their Lamps, Chriſt will come, and ſhut the Door of his Grace and Kingdom againſt them, *And the Door was ſhut.*

Some Profeſſors being careleſs and negligent when they enjoy powerful means of Grace, (*as the fooliſh Virgins were when they firſt went out to meet the Bridegroom,*) content

themſelves and are ſatisfied with ſome ſpiritual gifts without grace, and the form of Godlineſs without the power of it (*as the fooliſh Virgins did that took their Lamps, but took no Oyle with them.*) And ſo go on in the broad way of an outward cuſtomary and formal performance of holy duties and partaking of Goſpel Ordinances all the Day of Grace, until the night of ſecurity, eaſe and darkneſs overtake them, and they begin to ſlumber and fall faſt aſleep in their formality, or in their Apoſtaſie, until in ſome midnight diſpenſation, a Cry with a loud voice from the Lord, from the City or from the Temple, awaken them and affright them; And then they perceive that their Lamps are gone out, and that they themſelves are in a ſtate of darkneſs, wanting Chriſt and Grace in their ſouls (*as the fooliſh Virgins who wanted Oyle in their Veſſels and went to buy it.*) So ſome formal Profeſſors, *when it is too late*, ſeek for Grace and enquire after Chriſt; ſaying as *Balaam* did, *Let me dye the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his*, Numb. 23. 10. But their day of Grace being paſt, Chriſt ſhuts the door of Grace, ſaying, *He that is unjuſt let him be unjuſt ſtill, and he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill*, Rev. 22. 11. And Chriſt will when he comes *as*

the Bridegroom ſhut the door of his Kingdom againſt thoſe fooliſh Virgin-profeſſors, who refuſed the Offers, Call and Invitations of the Goſpel in the day of Grace, read *Prov.* 1. 20. to the end of the Chapter. Verſ. 24, 25, 28. *Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand and no man regarded.* ——*But ye have ſet at nought all my Counſel, and would none of my reproof. Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.* And as doth plainly appear in the 11 and 12 Verſes of this Chapter.

Verſ. 11, 12. *Afterward came alſo the other Virgins, ſaying, LORD, LORD, open unto us: But he anſwered and ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, I know you not.*

Afterwards, *or laſt of all*, that, is after the wiſe Virgin-ſaints were entred into the Marriage Chamber with Chriſt *the Bridegroom of his Church*, and after the door of the Kingdom of Chriſt was ſhut, then came the fooliſh Virgin-profeſſors, a multitude *or very many* formaliſts and Hypocrites, *ſaying, Lord, Lord, open to us.* They called and

cryed earnestly, prayed and beseeched the Lord Jesus Christ again and again to open the door of his Kingdom unto them, and let them have an entrance, admitted into his Everlasting Kingdom.

But he answering, said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. As they were earnest in their Request, so was Christ very positive in his Answer, *Verily*, assuredly, indeed and and truth, *I know you not*, I love you not, I do not approve of you, I own you not to be of the number of those that my Father gave me, and whom I redeemed with my blood, and whom I called and sanctified by my Spirit and Grace, and who sought to worship God by the Spirit and in truth, I know you not to be the adopted Children of my Father, justified and sanctified by faith that is in me. You are Formalists and Hypocrites, impenitent Backsliders and Apostates, who have denyed my Headship, my Kingly Office, and would not that I should reign over you. In a word, you are workers of Iniquity, *Depart from me*, I profess I do not know you, so as to approve of you, to own you, to open the door of my Kingdom to you, Luke 13. 24, 25, 26, 27. *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate, for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able.* ——*When once the Master*

Maſter of the houſe is riſen up and hath ſhut to the door, and ye begin to ſtand without, and to knock at the door, ſaying, Lord, Lord, open unto us, and he ſhall anſwer and ſay unto you, I know you not whence you are. Then ſhall ye begin to ſay, We have eaten and drunken in thy preſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets, ——But He ſhall ſay, I tell you I know you not whence you are, Depart from me ye workers of Iniquity.

Meditation. It will be a ſad aſtoniſhing and miſerably woful condition, that all fooliſh Virgin-Profeſſors will be in, when the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall exclude them and ſhut them out of his Kingdom, and diſown them for ever.

Virgin-Profeſſors having a ſtrong confidence, *Hoſea* 1. 8. and great hope and expectation, 1 *Cor.* 15. 19. of the pardon of all their Sins, and of Eternal life and Salvation, and then at laſt find by woful experience, that the Lord hath rejected their confidence, *Jer.* 2. 37. and their expectations be in vain and periſh, *Prov.* 10. 28. and their hope like the Spiders Web, Job 8. 13, 14. *For what is the hope of the Hypocrite, when God ſhall take away his ſoul,* Job 27. 8. and that God will not forgive their Iniquities, *Jer.* 14. 10. *and* 16. 18. but will give them

the wages of their ſins, *Rom.* 6. 23. and reward them according to their evil deeds, *Rom.* 2. 6, 9, 11. yea and they having had a ſtrong perſwaſion or preſumption, rather that when Chriſt comes, they ſhall have an entrance admitted to them into his everlaſting Kingdom; and at laſt Chriſt comes, and ſhuts the door of the Kingdom, and then they come and knock, and ſay Lord, Lord, open to us, and be denyed and repulſed, and Chriſt tell them he knows them not, and ſay depart from me ye Hypocrites, ye formal Profeſſors, ye fooliſh Virgins, and all ye workers of Iniquity, what an amazement and aſtoniſhment will it be to them? And then *they will begin to ſay, LORD we have eat and drunk in thy preſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets*, Luk. 13. 26, 27. *That is*, we have been under the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, and all the Adminiſtrations thereof. We have been often at the Lords Table, and have been partakers of all the holy Ordinances of God, Matth. 7. 21, 22, 23. *Not every one that ſaith, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.* —— *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophecied in thy name, and in thy name have done many wondrous works, and then will I profeſs*

unto

unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye that work Iniquity.

Verſ. 13. *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.*

This Verſe contains the uſe that Chriſt would have his Diſciples make of this Parable and of his Doctrine therein contained, and that is to watch, *Watch ye therefore*, which exhortation he urgeth from their ignorance of the time when Chriſt, *the Churches Bridegroom*, will come, *For ye know neither the day, nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.*

From whence two propoſitions, do ariſe, *viz.* 1. That the time of Chriſt his coming *as the Bridegroom* is not known to any Saint or Angel, but to the Father only.

2. That it's the Duty of all Chriſts Diſciples, to be watching and waiting daily for the glorious appearance of Chriſt, who will come as the Bridegroom of his Church.

Touching the firſt Propoſition, read Mat. 24. 36. Mark 13. 32. *But of that day, and that hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son but the Father*—— Though God the Father hath re-

ſerved the knowledge of the day and hour of Chriſt, the *Bridegrooms* coming in his own *ſecret decree*, yet hath he given forth and revealed ſome ſigns of his coming which are *recorded* in the holy Scriptures of truth, which his Diſciples being deſirous to know, asked him ſaying, *And what ſhall be the ſign of thy coming?* Matth. 24. 3. Unto which queſtion Chriſt anſwered many things, but more particularly he told them, 1. That his Saints and Servants ſhould ſuffer great perſecutions, *Matth.* 24. 9. *& Luk.* 21. 12, 16, 17. 2. That Iniquity ſhall abound, and the Love of many will wax cold, *Matth.* 24. 12. 3. That the Goſpel of the Kingdom ſhall be Preached in all the World, for a Witneſs unto all Nations, *Matth.* 24. 14. 4. That then ſhall be great Tribulation, ſuch as never was, no nor ever ſhall be, *Matth.* 24. 21. And immediately after the tribulation of thoſe dayes the powers of Heaven ſhall be ſhaken, and then the ſhall appear the ſign of Son of man in Heaven, *Matth.* 24. 29, 30.

Touching the ſecond Propoſition, read, Matth. 24. 42. & 25. 13. Luk. 21. 36. *Watch ye therefore, and pray alwayes that ye may be accounted worthy to eſcape all thoſe things that ſhall come to paſs and to ſtand before the Son of man.* They that would be accounted worthy

worthy to ſtand before Chriſt the Bridegroom, when he comes, muſt watch and pray continually.

Watching implies, 1. That Profeſſors, Chriſts Diſciples ought to be awake, Rom. 13. 11. *And that knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of ſleep, for now is our ſalvation nearer than when we believed.* 1 Theſ. 5. 2, 6. *For your ſelves know perfectly, That the day of the Lord ſo cometh as a thief in the night.*

2. That Profeſſors are to be in a continual expectation of Chriſt his glorious appearance *as they that watch for the morning*, Pſal. 130. 5, 6. *I wait for the Lord: my ſoul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My ſoul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I ſay, more than they that watch for the morning.* And Luk. 12. 35, 36, 37, 38. *Let your Loins be girded about, and your Lamps burning. —— And ye your ſelves like unto men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the Wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Bleſſed are thoſe Servants, whom the Lord when he cometh ſhall find watching. Verily, I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelf, and make them to ſit down to meat, and will come forth and ſerve them. And if he ſhall come in the*

ſecond watch, or come in the third watch, and find them ſo, bleſſed are thoſe ſervants.

3. That Profeſſors be looking out, deſirous of and longing for the coming and Kingdom of Chriſt, 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12. *Looking for and haſting unto the coming of the day of God.*

Watching is a neceſſary Duty incumbent upon Chriſtians at all times, *Luk.* 21. 36. in all things, 2 *Tim.* 4. 5. It's our duty in every duty; We ought to watch and pray, *Matth.* 26. 41. to watch unto prayer, 1 *Pet.* 4. 7. and to watch after prayer, and wait for the return and anſwer of our prayers. Chriſtians ought to watch their hearts, thoughts and affections; they ought to ſet a watch before the door of their Lips, that their Tongues do not offend, and they ought to watch their lives and converſations in their callings and imployments in the World. But eſpecially Chriſtians ought to watch for the glorious appearance of the Bridegroom, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Matth.* 24. 42. And they ought to be in a watching poſture, and upon watching work or duty, *eſpecially*, when they hear of his near approach. Yea, and it is the Duty of Believers, to be upon their watch all the *Myſtical* night, until the Bridegroom come.

The word, *Watch*, is borrowed from Shepheards, or Souldiers, or Sea-men, or Porters,

or

or Citizens, who uſe, to watch in the night ſeaſon. The Jews divided the night into 3 Watches, whereof the firſt began at Twilight, and continued till Midnight, called the *Beginning* of the watches, *Lam.* 2. 19. the ſecond watch began at midnight, and continued until the Cock-crowing, called the *middle* watch, *Judg.* 7. 19. and the third watch was from the Cock-crowing till Sun-riſing, called the Morning watch, *Exod.* 14. 24. And according to this Hebrew Dialect and Diviſion of the *Myſtical* Night in this Parable, the Time of this Duty to be attended was the Morning watch, for *midnight* was paſt, and the Day of Chriſt was dawning, or near approaching, Behold the Bridegroom comes; wath ye therefore, *&c.* as they, *Pſal.* 130. 5, 6.

Querie. *Watchmen, What of the Night?*

Anſwer. The Morning cometh, and alſo the Night, Iſa. 21. 12. *If ye will enquire, enquire ye,* &c. viz. That Morning when the Righteous ſhall have the Dominion, *Pſal.* 49. 14 And alſo the Night, even that Night of *Myſtical Babylons* Deſtruction, foretold *Rev.* 18. 8, 10, 19, 21, 22, 23.

But more particularly, That we may the better underſtand, what Time of the *myſtical* Night it is with us in our Land-Horiſon, it

may

may be considered, That after that fair Sunshine DAY of the Gospel, *in the dayes of Christ and his Apostles* had continued for some Years, a Night of great Darkness and bloody Persecution began, which continued to the Reign of *Constantine* the great; And that was the first Watch of our *mystical* Night. And after the Moonshine Reformation during *Constantines* time, the *Arian* Clouds of mystical Darkness, overspread the face of the Ecclesiastical Heavens, and at last the Beast opened the Bottomless pit, and there arose a smoak out of the pit, as the smoak of a great furnace, and the Sun and the Aire were darkened, by reason of the smoak of the Pit, *Rev.* 9. 1, 2, 3. and this dark midnight dispensation, will continue till within 3 or 4 Hours of the Sun-rising: And this is the second watch of the *Mystical* Night of Popery, and Persecution. So that the Morning watch is the third and next, which will continue till the Sun of Righteousness arise; which watch will begin at, or about the time of the Beasts killing Christs witnesses, and will continue about 3 ½ prophetical dayes, *of years*,, Rev. 11. 7, 11, 15. During that time of the Witnesses lying dead, *Rev.* 11. 8, 9. the wise Virgins are commanded to Watch, *Matt.* 25. 13.

And

And they ought to be *in a watching Posture, that is to say*, waking, waiting, looking, longing for and believing the near approach and suddain coming of the Bridegroom, *namely*, our Lord Jesus Christ. And also *about watching work*, to wit, doing the work of their Generation; in bearing their witness for Christ, against Anti-Christ his Ministry, Magistracy, Churches, Worship, Ordinances and Discipline, and in finishing their Testimony of the Kingdom and Dominion of Christ, against the Kingdom and Dominion of Anti-christ. That when Christ comes and finds them so doing, he may say, Well done good and faithful Servants, enter ye into the joyes of your Master. So the wise Virgins being thus prepared and ready, they may enter into the Marriage Chamber with the Bridegroom when he comes.

FINIS.